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Freedom of the Light

By

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Fine Arts in Film and Animation

School of Film and Animation

College of Art and Design

Rochester Institute of Technology

Rochester, NY

December 10, 2020

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Chapter 1: The Abstract

Freedom of the Light is a feature length script that follows the heir to a highly religious kingdom on her journey of self discovery and revelation. Amalye Alsean has spent her entire life in the isolationist kingdom of Caelios, being told that the other inhabitants of the continent are merciless barbaric savages. It is only when she defies her father and experiences the continent herself that she is able to see the lies she has been fed. With her newfound power and knowledge, she must confront her father and enlighten her people. The script explores the relationships between father and daughter, insiders and outsiders, believers and nonbelievers. The project serves as an experiment of world building, taking inspiration and knowledge from other prime world building examples. The script also takes a look at interpersonal relationships and utilizes the subtleties of dialogue. The story follows and alters the steps of Christopher Vogler's hero journey, and explores its stages in depth.

Chapter 2: Artist Statement

Fantasy has always been at the core of who I am. Even as a young boy, I would create other worlds and imagine myself being someone, something, else. If I wanted to be a magical sorcerer casting powerful spells to defeat a dragon or a Paladin questioning the orders of her knight commander, I could do that. I could be male or female, young or old, a mere peasant or a regal king, whatever I wanted to imagine. Fantasy and imagination allowed me to escape reality. Reality is often mundane, boring, tedious, and limiting. So often we have to be what others want us to be, and hide the true desires of our actual selves. However, in the fantasy world, we are freed of those rules, those expectations. Societal norms and expectations as well as physical restraints are removed in the imagination of the fantasy world. Writers are typically told to write from experience, using their personal lives as inspiration for their stories. This works for people who lead exciting lives, going on adventures all the time. But what if your life is less eventful and more repetitive? If every day is a mundane routine, then you lack any interesting stories to share with others. Fantasy has given me a way to make things exciting in my mind, creating worlds and characters that are capable of doing impossible things.

One thing I have learned and really tried to embrace over the past two years is the idea that my hobbies do not have to be exclusive from my academic or professional work. I was always told in my youth, by my teachers, parents, and family members, that video games were nothing but a waste of time and were rotting my brain. Nothing would ever come from playing hours and hours of video games. However, this was not the case. Much of my writing inspiration and creative work comes from my years of research playing video games. I have played over 1000 hours of *The Elders Scrolls V: Skyrim*, and yet I find myself coming back to it, time and time again. When I started to question why I have invested so much time into this one title, and why I continue to do so, the answer became apparent. The world of Tamriel is so immersive and filled with so much lore that one could write an entire history book on the game alone. It was Bethesda's passion for the world they developed, and my desire to learn more and

more about it, that drove my passion for the game. This is just one of many games that have inspired my writing. I strive to create a world and stories that are as immersive and intriguing. I want my audience to be invested in my stories to the point that they want to learn as much about the characters and the world they live in as possible.

The focus of any good story is the characters, while the world takes a backseat. Memorable moments are created by characters and the audience's rooting interest and also their retention is generated by them. The viewer will often attach themselves and use a specific person in the film as a surrogate through which they will experience the story. It is important to have a cast of characters that the audience will be invested in and want to watch. Tolkien does a fantastic job of this in *The Lord of the Rings*. The Fellowship of the Ring is such a large cast of characters, but yet each one of them is distinct with their own unique voice and attitude. They each have their character motives and desires that cause them to all act in the way they do. Gimli, Legolas, Samwise, Aragorn. Each of them is distinguished from the others and the audience has rooting interest in them, desiring to see their stories through. Most importantly though, all of these characters act in a reliable manner. Their voice remains the same, be it in combat or in discussion. Their actions are motivated and can be understood by their character wants and desires. Developing the characters of any story is crucial. Creating their wants and desires, backstories, and maintaining their voices in everything they do will establish characters that audiences will want to watch.

Chapter 3: The Hero's Journey

When it comes to writing a script about a hero going on an adventure, it is impossible to not be influenced by Joseph Campbell's *The Hero's Journey* and *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Campbell reflects on many of the classical mythological stories about heroes and the various quests upon which they embark. In doing so, Campbell lists many steps that are almost universal throughout all of these journeys. This acts as a sort of guideline for creating new stories as well. Christopher Vogler condensed Campbell's steps of the hero journey into twelve simplified steps in his novel, *The Writer's Journey*. For example, *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope* follows Vogler's twelve steps almost perfectly. While it is important to utilize and understand the twelve steps, it is also important to deviate from them or alter them to better fit the story one wishes to tell. If every story followed the hero's journey steps to a tee, they would become bland cookie-cutter stories that are highly predictable. Reinterpreting steps and reordering them is important to making your story stand apart from the others that follow the pattern and in many cases required to make a logical progression of events in your story.

Adapting the twelve steps of Vogler's hero's journey to *The Freedom of the Light* was a fairly easy task, as I am quite familiar with them and they have played a big part of many of the fantasy novels, movies, and worlds that have inspired me. The first of these steps is the ordinary world. This is the life that our point of view character is accustomed to and experiences on a daily basis. This is perhaps the easiest of the twelve steps, because it is simply what our hero is familiar with doing. This ordinary world does not always have to be one with which we are familiar. In many instances, these ordinary worlds are actually quite extraordinary to us, but considered mundane to our hero. In the case of *Star Wars*, it is Luke being a moisture farmer.

For *The Lord of the Rings*, it is Frodo living a happy life in the Shire. For *The Freedom of the Light*, it is Amalye living in the Alphere Dominion. She is accustomed to her life in Caelios, and without some outside force changing up her normality, she would continue to live there peacefully. While the books she reads in their library inspire her to want more from her life and adventure, they also teach her about the horrors outside their walls. She is happy enough reading about other adventures, and despite her feelings toward her father, she is content in Caelios. The second step, the call to adventure, is that outside force that acts upon the hero, quite literally calling them to go on their quest. In *Star Wars*, this is Prince Leia's message of "Help me, Obi Wan Kenobi. You're my only hope" stored in R2D2. In *The Lord of the Rings*, it is Gandalf giving the One Ring to Frodo. In my thesis, it is when Amalye discovers the book of forbidden knowledge. Typically, following this call to adventure, the hero will refuse, as the quest will take them out of their ordinary world, their comfort zone, and is more often than not, a dangerous undertaking. For my thesis, I viewed this third step, the refusal of the call, to be an ongoing event. Many times throughout the story, Amalye will be called upon to be Falicar's chosen, but it is not until late in the story that she is actually willing to take up this mantle. The fourth step, meeting the mentor, happens later in my story as well. This is the step where the hero character meets a "wise old man", a character that will teach them about their quest and the new world that they are about to enter. This character is typically killed off or otherwise removed when the hero has reached their potential and they are prepared to face the ultimate evil on their own. The mentor character, Caldwell, is not met until Amalye has already crossed the threshold, and is not removed until they return to Caelios. I felt that it only made sense for Amalye's mentor to be someone outside of her own people. Ouldue acts a fake mentor early on in the story, leading the reader to believe he will teach her about the forbidden secrets of their people, but he is in fact

another agent of Uryth. So it was only once the threshold had been crossed that Amalye could meet the person who would teach her about the world.

The crossing of the threshold is perhaps one of the most crucial elements of Vogler's hero journey and serves at the first act break for a three act structure. The fifth step is the drastic change from the known to the unknown, the moment the hero is forced out of the ordinary world and into this new special world. For *Star Wars*, it is when Luke leaves the farm for Tatooine. In *The Lord of the Rings*, it is when the Hobbits are forced out of the Shire by the Nazguls. This change from the known to the unknown occurs in my script when Amalye leaves the comfort and safety of her luxurious life in Caelios for the potentially harsh and cruel world of Alinon.

Amalye experiences the more cutthroat environment of the Gallaroth Empire, as her naivety and pampered history gets her swindled and ridiculed. The next step is perhaps the longest of them all: the tests, allies, and enemies. During this phase of the story, we are introduced to the hero's allies, which frequently fill a number of archetypal roles that I will get into later. Han, Leia, the Fellowship of the Ring. This is also when those who would wish our hero harm are revealed, and throughout our hero is put to various tests, trials, and tribulations to prove their worthiness. This is a more ongoing step in the process, and canvases a large portion of the script. Meeting Harx in Gallaroth, the trip from Gallaroth to Sanni, meeting Durin and Hallith, and facing her brother in Sanni are just a few of the moments incorporated in this step. During this whole step though, Amalye is learning the truth about the people she once viewed as barbarians and being taught that, while there are those to be feared, with the right attitude, many of the denizens of Alinon are warm and friendly. Approaching the inmost cave is the moment in the story where the hero and their recently formed band of merry men make their way to the lair of the villain or the home of the sword. It is the moment they reach the destination for which they set out. For my story,

this is when Amalye and friends reach the temple hidden in the valley. It is within this inmost cave that the hero will experience the next two steps: the ordeal and seizing the sword. The ordeal is not to be confused with the climax of the story. It is however typically one of the most arduous trials that our hero will face in their journey, that brings them to their lowest point. This occurs when Amalye acquires what she believes to be the Mace of Falicar, only to have it crumble to dust in her hands. The ordeal is typically followed immediately by seizing the sword. This is the moment that the sought after knowledge or item is acquired, giving our hero the power to defeat their greatest threat. In *Star Wars*, it is when Luke gets the Death Star plans. I wanted to lead people astray a bit here by making the mace seem to be the sword with which Amalye was going to leave the cave. However, in my story, the seizing of the sword happens a little later, during the return home stage. It is when Amalye realizes that she has proven herself to Falicar and call upon his power. She has finally become her own person, and is no longer controlled by her father. It may be a bit cliché to say it, but I wanted it to be a moment where it was the friends she made along the journey that was the real treasure, and she realizes that she does care about these friends she has made and does not want to see them harmed by her attackers.

The ordeal and seizing the sword bring us into the third act of the story, which starts with Vogler's tenth step, the return home or the road back. This is when our hero transitions back to the ordinary world from the unknown. Typically this is also when the villain is at their strongest and leads to the climactic moment of the story, the resurrection. This is when Caldwell convinces Amalye it is time for her to return home, the journey is over. Including the derailment into the Merain Forest, this is the moment where Amalye learns to stand up for herself and defend those she cares about most. The resurrection, the penultimate step of the hero's journey, is when they

are reinvigorated and confront the villain. This moment can happen before or after the hero actually reaches the ordinary world. In the case of my story, it occurs once Amalye is back home. She has the ultimate choice to make. Does she side with the friends she made on her journey and confront her father? Or does she give in and return to the life she knew before? Though it would be easier for her to give into her father's desires and return to the easy life, she knows deep inside that it would be wrong to do so. She must stand up for herself and her friends. They have protected her during their whole journey, it is time she protects them. In standing up to her father, she shows her people that she is the new Grand Divine. The fact that Falicar chose her lends huge credibility to what she says, and the fact that Uryth's descent into madness has worsened helps that too. Once the hero has defeated the villain, they reach the last step of their journey, the return with the elixir. This is the moment that our hero returns home a changed person. They learned and experienced a lot on their journey, and have acquired the ultimate prize. Whether this prize is something physical or spiritual or if it is a changed state of mind depends on the story. Often times this moment is when their needs are filled, rather than their wants.

Chapter 4: Character Archetypes

Another important topic that Christopher Vogler covers in his novel *The Writer's Journey* is developing the cast of characters. Vogler describes eight character archetypes and how they impact the creation and arc of the hero's journey. These are typical character roles that are found throughout stories that follow the hero's journey formula. These archetypes are the hero, the mentor, the threshold guardian, the herald, the shapeshifter, the shadow, the ally, and the trickster. These characters all have their own motivations, character arcs, and flaws. It is always important to make your characters have depth to create intrigue and keep the readers and viewers interested in what will happen to those characters.

The first and most important of the characters for the hero's journey is the hero themselves. The hero is typically the point of view character and the one in which people have the most investment. In the usual definition of protagonist as the "good guy" of the story, the hero fills that role. However, Lajos Egri describes a protagonist as the character that forces the story to progress, whereas the antagonist is the one that reacts to the actions of the protagonist. In this case, the hero can be either of those, but I would argue typically the antagonist of the story. In *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope*, our hero is Luke Skywalker. In *The Lord of the Rings*, the hero is Frodo Baggins. In *The Freedom of the Light*, the hero is Amalye Alsean. She is the point of view character and the one that will have the most drastic change throughout the story. Reluctance and character arc are most important with the hero because we want to see them struggle to overcome their flaws and challenges and how they respond to those situations. Amalye is reluctant to embrace Falicar at first, because she is trying to make the most of her new found freedom from her father. At the same time, her naivety having grown up as a privileged

rich daughter of a leader causes grievances with those she meets and puts her in situations that could be otherwise avoided. She has never had to pay for anything and has never had to take care of herself until now.

The next character that Vogler covers is the mentor. The mentor usually takes the form of a wise old man or woman and is crucial for the meeting of the mentor step in the journey. While it is possible to skip the step and therefore remove the mentor, it is the mentor that is supposed to familiarize our hero with the extraordinary world in which they will take their journey. They provide guidance and educate the hero in forces with which they are unfamiliar. Gandalf tells the hobbits about the One Ring and warns them of Sauron's ever growing strength. Obi Wan Kenobi teaches Luke about the mysterious ways of the Force and also informs him about his presumably deceased father. Caldwell teaches Amalye about the version of Alinon that has been kept secret from her people for generations. Caldwell shows Amalye the kindness and fatherly love that she so desperately needed.

The threshold guardian is the character that keeps the hero from their extraordinary world and provides challenges for the hero to overcome. These guardians are not meant to be beaten in a head-on physical fight, but rather it is up to our hero to outsmart and trick them. One of the most common examples of the threshold guardian is Polyphemus from *The Odyssey*. Odysseus could not defeat the cyclops in a physical competition, so instead he outsmarts Polyphemus to enter the cave. In *Star Wars*, this character is Darth Vader. While most, including Vogler himself, would attribute him to being the shadow, I would argue that Vader is not the ultimate villain in any of the films, but rather the threshold guardian. Luke never defeats Vader in a lightsaber fight, but instead outsmarts him, pretending to side with him in order to gain his trust and turn him into an ally. In my script, this character is Mureel, Amalye's older brother. She can

defeat him in combat and he threatens to end her journey at every step. So she must outwit him, pushing herself to accomplish things she otherwise would not. This can be seen in the scene where Amalye hides in the wagon to avoid Mureel. Mureel has the potential to become an ally, but due to his father's corruption, he is adamant that he is on the correct path.

The herald is the next of Vogler's archetypes and like the threshold guardian, plays a direct role in the steps of the hero's journey. The herald is the character that calls the hero to their journey. They are the one that informs both the hero and the audience of the details about the quest and beckon the upcoming change in the hero's life. In *Star Wars*, this character is Leia in her message to Obi Wan. In my story, this is Falicar, the god of the Alphere. He is the one that gets the quest started by appearing to Amalye in her dream. He appears to her several times, each time providing her with more and more information of what he desires from her.

The shapeshifter is a character archetype whose allegiance is always in question, either to the hero or to the shadow, but most commonly the hero. The shapeshifter's role is to sow doubt into the mind of the hero, causing them to wonder if they are on the right path or safe with their current group of allies. Han Solo is a shapeshifter character. Despite seeming allegiance to Luke, Han makes it clear that he is only involved for the money at the start, which then switches to his interest in Leia. Luke, as well as the audience, constantly question where Han's allegiance really lies, but in the end he does side with Luke and the Resistance. Siding with the hero, or their presumed association, at the end of the film is not required of the shapeshifter. Their loyalty might waver and they might betray their compatriots. Boromir in *The Lord of the Rings* is an excellent example of a shapeshifter, as he consistently shows little devotion to anyone other than himself. In the end, he does lay down his own life to further the cause of destroying the ring, despite being tempted by the ring in earlier scenes and turning on Frodo and Sam. There are

several shapeshifters in my story. Veloe acts as a shapeshifter to Uryth, constantly questioning Uryth's commitment to the Light and showing signs of dissent throughout the story. Hallith and Durin act as shapeshifters for Amalye, causing her to question her faith in Falicar and her dedication to her quest.

The shadow is the counterpart to the hero. It is the villain of the story or the big bad evil guy, as tabletop role playing games refer to them. While the shadow is the character our hero is up against, it is also important to display their flaws and virtues as much as any other character. A villain who only has flaws not only shows a lack of investment from the writer but also reduces the ability of the audience to care about the villain. The best shadows are the ones that we want to see changed by the actions of the hero. They have redeeming qualities and show the capacity to change. This is not always the case though, as it is also gratifying to see the forces of evil quelled by the righteous, as is the case with Sauron and Darth Sidious. Uryth Alsean plays the role of the shadow in my script. He is emotionally and physically abusive to his children and is corrupting his congregation, spreading racist and supremacist beliefs. He shows a compassionate side as he talks to his late wife, but his desire for greed and domination drive him mad.

The archetype of ally encompasses a wide spectrum of characters in films and stories. Allies can range from sidekicks to friends to pets and everything in between. Allies are characters that assist the hero on their journey, supporting them, providing them with more information, and doing everything within their power to make sure the hero succeeds. *The Lord of the Rings* has perhaps the largest cast of allies, as the entire Fellowship is considered allies of Frodo. Samwise, Legolas, Aragorn, Gimli, all of them are allies. In *The Freedom of the Light*,

Amalye has allies in Caldwell, Durin, Kat, Izana, and several others. All of them work to ensure her safety and progress her story along its path.

The trickster is an archetype that is commonly referred to as the comedic relief. These characters embody chaos and provide humor to the story. In *Star Wars*, Chewbacca, C-3PO and R2-D2 fill this role with their banter and mischief. In *The Lord of the Rings*, Merry and Pippin are tricksters. Merry and Pippin are great tricksters, as they also go through huge character growth throughout the trilogy. They start as simple trickster characters who seemingly do nothing more than cause pandemonium and crack jokes. However, as the story progresses, they become stronger individuals and develop their own personalities. In my story, Durin is the trickster. His banter with Caldwell and Amalye and his incessant talking, which is often not even directed at any other member of the party, adds humor to the scenes, once he is introduced. Prior to that, Caldwell did not speak much with Amalye and when he did, it was with a rather cynical tone. Durin adds an amount of levity and further bonds Caldwell and Amalye with their annoyance of him.

Chapter 5: World Building

Writing a fantasy script, another one of my biggest inspirations was J.R.R. Tolkien's series *The Lord of the Rings*. World building and fantasy have always been at the core of who I am, and without Tolkien's masterpiece, we would not have modern high fantasy. Our modern concept of orcs and elves, dwarves and halflings, and most fantasy races would not exist without Tolkien. The term race here being a colloquialism in the fantasy genre to differentiate sentient beings with drastically different physiological aspects. In many cases, each "race" is actually a species, in terms of phylum. For example, the genus of elf is frequently then broken into the species of high elf, moon elf, or wood elf. However, many franchises, such as *Dungeons & Dragons* and *The Elder Scrolls*, would never have been made without Tolkien. Tolkien created an entire complex world full of unique races and kingdoms. I have always strived to create a world of my own that can even be remotely as well developed as Middle Earth.

Another major influence for my work is the video game series *The Elder Scrolls*. Bethesda's series explores various events throughout the continent of Tamriel. Each game takes place in a different province of the continent while the world is in a crisis. The most interesting part of these games is the immense amount of lore embedded in them. Each game tells more and more of the in depth culture and history of the continent and its inhabitants. Each province has its own unique culture, lifestyle, and people. The hearty nords of Skyrim live like vikings in their snowy province far north. The mercantile khajjits caravan around the deserts of Elsweyr. The mighty orsimer build longhouses around the provinces and honor strength and determination above all. All of the elven races are descendants of one older elven race and therefore all have the suffix -mer attached to them. All of the human races descended from the Atmorans, the first

men to step foot on Tamriel. The continent has such a deep history, as playing through the games, you will discover ancient civilizations of the industrious dwemer, who fashioned technology the world has since forgotten. The writers at Bethesda have such an intricate history for the ten unique races that inhabit the continent. It is so truly inspiring to witness and experience the world through the gameplay that I have put well over one thousand hours into the game.

In *The Elder Scrolls* series, powerful otherworldly beings heavily influence the mortal world. These beings are separated into the two categories of Aedra and Daedra. Generally speaking, the Aedra are thought to be deities that are good, while the Daedra are typically considered evil. The most important Aedra are also referred to as the Eight Divine, though there is a matter of debate if there are actually nine Divines. Tiber Septim, who founded the empire, is considered by many to be a ninth divine, Talos, as it is believed he transcended to godhood. The Aedra do not communicate with the mortals, so it is impossible to know if Tiber Septim did transcend or not. The Aedra sacrificed their physical beings to create Mundus, and are therefore considered to be the planets and stars in the night sky. Each of the Eight Divines are associated with a domain, and are officially the religion of the Septim Empire, revering them as gods and goddesses. For example, Mara is the goddess of love and anyone who wishes to be married within the Septim Empire is married in a ceremony before Her Benevolence. Arkay is the god of life and death, and all burial ceremonies are conducted in his name.

The Daedric Princes, on the other hand, do communicate with the mortals. While there are only eight important Aedra, there are sixteen Daedric Princes. Each Prince has their own patronage and realm of Oblivion. Many of these realms are torturous hells, such as the Deadlands, while others are purgatories, like Coldharbour, and others have yet to be revealed.

Many of these Princes are inherently evil. Mehrunes Dagon is a force of destruction, and has attempted before to destroy Nirn. Molag Bal is the Prince of domination and slavery, and known to be the reason that vampires exist in the universe. While the majority of Tamriel considers the Daedra to be evil and conniving, there are those that worship the Daedra and not all Daedra are inherently evil. Meridia is the Daedric Prince of the living and rewards those who kill undead abominations. The Dunmer of Morrowind openly worship Azura, Mephala, and Boethiah. Azura is the Daedric Prince of the dusk and dawn and is another generally considered to be benevolent, however Boethiah, the Daedric Prince of deceit and conspiracy, and Mephala, the Daedric Prince of manipulation, are generally considered to be maligne by the rest of the races. Both the cult of Boethiah and the cult of Mephala are known for murder. Some Daedra are more chaotic than necessarily evil. Sheogorath is the Daedric Prince of madness and prefers creating chaos and pandemonium, but not with any malintent. Clavicus Vile is associated with deals and pacts. While he will always honor the pacts he creates, he will often do so in a way he considers fun, which usually entails killing or otherwise harming the dealmaker, much like a djinni. Hermaeus Mora is an omniscient Daedra who only cares about obtaining more knowledge. So to label all Daedra as being evil is incorrect. They each have their own motives and ambitions.

World building is one of the key concepts of most role playing video games, and the highly successful ones have incredibly in-depth worlds to explore and lore to discover. *World of Warcraft*, a title by Blizzard Entertainment, is perhaps the most successful massively multiplayer online role playing game (MMORPG) and I believe one of the reasons it is so successful is that Azeroth, the world in which *Warcraft* is set, is an expansive world with an ever-growing history. While *The Elder Scrolls* focuses more on the player character's involvement and choices, *World of Warcraft* focuses more on non-player characters (NPCs) and how the players interact with

their stories. The on-going theme of the game is that there are multiple sides fighting for control over Azeroth. The Horde, a group of trolls, orcs, and kobolds fight to have a new homeland, as theirs was destroyed by the fel. The Alliance, the “good guys”, fight to drive the Horde out of their territory, believing that they will bring the fel with them. Blizzard has other factions too that fight for Azeroth, such as the Burning Legion and the Scourge, but the two main ones are the Alliance and the Horde.

These are just a few of the many examples of world building that have impacted my own development. I would be remiss to at least not mention a few others in passing detail. George R.R. Martin’s *A Song of Ice and Fire* series, or as many would call it, *Game of Thrones*, as the television series was named, set in Westeros, BioWare’s *Dragon Age* series set in Thedas, Larian Studios’ *Divinity* series set in Rivellon, Wizards of the Coast’s *Dungeons and Dragons* series set in Faerun are just a few more titles that have inspired my own work, and serve as excellent examples of world building.

All of the aforementioned works owe a great deal of their inspiration to Tolkien, and to each other. But to say that Tolkien is the originator of world building would not be entirely true, for he owes his inspiration to other works too. Tolkien developed the world of Middle Earth by utilizing and reconceptualizing folklore and oral tradition. Similarly to how Campbell looked at all the classical mythos and found patterns in them to create his hero journey, Tolkien found patterns in the stories like those compiled by the Brothers Grimm and used those patterns to create *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit*, and the other titles that take place in Middle Earth. In a similar sense, I have experienced a lot of world building and have noticed my own patterns of what works and what does not work when trying to draw an audience into your world. Immersion can be broken by even the simplest of mistakes, and it is often the smaller mistakes

that really damage the immersion the most. Thus in the same way that Campbell compiled mythological stories and Tolkien compiled folklore and adapted it to their needs, I have compiled fantasy video games, novels, and films, adapted them, and created my own fantasy world, the continent of Alinon.

The continent of Tamriel and the lands of Middle Earth are heavily what inspired the continent of Alinon. I have developed the continent to have several different kingdoms, each with dominion over a large area of land. Similarly to how the different elven tribes and dwarven clans of Middle Earth are interconnected and yet entirely separate cultures based on which mountain or forest they inhabit, each kingdom in Alinon has its own diverse culture. I have developed eight unique races that fall into two categories, human or elf, and have the appropriate suffix to identify their ancestral origins. There are four of each. The ancient humans, the Oro, over many generations, and with a little help from magic, branched into the Maloro, the Minoro, and the Acoro. The ancient elves, the Ere, similarly branched into the Malere, the Botere, and the Alphere. Each kingdom is mostly inhabited by one race, with the exception being the Oro kingdoms that have very diverse populations. Alinon shares several similarities with Tamriel in this manner.

Religion plays a major role in the script, and therefore it was necessary to have the gods as well developed as the rest of the continent. For religious inspiration, I looked to the divine in *The Elder Scrolls* and *Divinity* series, as well as existing religions in the real world. The Aedra and Daedra are not gods, even though they are worshipped as such. They are immortal, powerful extraplanar beings. They are not too dissimilar from the ancient gods of Greece and Rome. The Daedric Princes are as complex as the Olympians, and similarly, are created to be more personal. This can also be seen in the Divines of Rivellon. They are mortal, yet eternal, beings that exist

outside of Rivellon, while still influencing the mortal plane and being able to interact with their chosen champions. The Daedra, Aedra, Divines, and Olympians all have mortal quirks and are prone to act on their emotions. Creating a pantheon like this was one of my goals with creating my continent. Having a large pantheon was not something I felt was required, so I limited it to only six prime deities, though there are lesser immortals that serve the main gods. Each god also represented a part of the continent, and therefore was the one most worshipped by the people of that area. For example, Marily is the goddess of nature and growth, so she is associated with the Merain Forest and the botere. Carsino is the god of death and pestilence, and therefore primarily worshipped by the Maloro. Each of the six gods has their relationship with the other, their own wants and desires, and their own personalities. I think one of the most important things, both in the pantheon of Tamriel and Alinon, is that these beings are real and tangible. They are more than just a spiritual concept. These beings, both the gods of Alinon and Daedric Princes of Tamriel, influence and change the mortal world through their actions.

Chapter 6: Expanded Universe

World building opens up many possibilities when it comes to storytelling, especially within the medium of cinema. Perhaps one of the most common features that has been growing in popularity recently is the concept of an expanded universe. Expanded universes are the amalgamation of separate titles that coexist within the same world. These titles are typically individual stories that may bare little to no influence on other titles that take place. The films or series can be watched on their own and be comprehensible and complete without being familiarized with the other titles in that expanded universe. For viewers that have watched the complete grouping of series or films, they will frequently be rewarded with easter eggs, cameos, or advanced knowledge of side characters. An important aspect to keep in mind when creating an expanded universe is that each film or series should be viewable without former knowledge from the others. Each title should be a complete piece within itself, with a beginning, a middle, and an end.

Examples of cinematic expanded universes can be seen in both movies and series, usually pertaining to superheroes. Marvel Entertainment has the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) which contains films, such as *Iron Man*, *Doctor Strange*, and *Guardians of the Galaxy*, as well as the television series *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* The characters in the MCU have their separate titles that focus on their story, but they will often appear and play larger roles in other characters' titles. For example, in the film *Thor: Ragnarok*, we focus on the story of Thor trying to save his homeworld from destruction, but both Doctor Strange and The Hulk play roles as well. The culmination of the MCU exists within their Avengers films. In those films, they bring in a larger number of their characters to take on a stronger villain than they do in their individual titles. DC

Comics also has their expanded universe, known as the Arrowverse. Rather than films, this consists exclusively of television series, such as *Arrow*, *Flash*, and *Supergirl*. Each series exists without the others, with only the occasional mention or cameo of a character from one of the other series. The Arrowverse's version of the Avengers films is the crossover event that occurs once per season. Each season of all of the Arrowverse series, there is a crossover event that ties all of the stories together for an episode per title, before returning them to their separate series. Skipping the crossover event would have little impact on the rest of the season. Examples of expanded universes can also be seen outside of superhero related productions. Star Wars is an expanded universe with the inclusion of *Solo: A Star Wars Story*, *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*, *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*, and *Star Wars Rebels*. These films and series are considered canon within the universe while at the same time existing outside of the Skywalker Saga. Episodes One through Nine are considered sequels and are therefore not an expanded universe, but the expanded universe films feature other characters and occur tangentially to the main saga.

The continent of Alinon is full of history and stories that can be told. My hopes are to continue telling the stories of Alinon in novels and scripts, creating my own expanded universe. To a small degree, I have already started working towards achieving this goal. A short script that I wrote while taking Writing the Short, *Reign: Pallor's Last Stand*, also takes place in Alinon. It tells the story of Slia, a general in the Gallaroth Empire as she defends the fort she controls from the invading Maloro army. The script I wrote in Writing the Feature, *Reign: The War of Gallaroth*, takes place some time after the events of that story and encompasses three plot lines. High General Zax of the Gallaroth Empire betrays his emperor and leads the war more aggressively. Prince Brac of the Raglup Kingdom works to eradicate the Oro in an attempt to prove himself to his father. Princess Falla steps up, becoming the leader the Oro people need to

survive the war. While both of these stories take place in Alinon, they only have a miniscule impact on the story of my thesis. They provide some background information as to various character's stereotypes and biases towards other races in Alinon. However, these can be understood from the thesis on its own. The other two scripts tell stories that are unrelated yet complete in their own.

One suggestion that I have received is to turn these stories into novels. This is a long term goal of mine, as I do desire to write down all the stories of Alinon that I have fabricated in my head. This also goes to working towards my end goal of creating a multimedia universe. I personally feel as though there are not many fantasy worlds that are widely popular. The two that the most people are familiar with are Tolkien's Middle Earth and Martin's Westeros. To compare myself with Tolkien would be a true crime, but I do strive to create a world like his that people will recognize. Between the film scripts, novels, and artwork that I create in Alinon, I hope to elevate the world building and make Alinon feel more tangible and realistic.

Chapter 7: Thesis Requirements

For this thesis, I was tasked with outlining and writing a feature length script about a topic of my choosing. The script had to be between eighty and one hundred thirty pages long. The thesis first had to be approved by a committee of randomly selected members from the School of Film and Animation. Once the thesis proposal was approved, which was a harder process than I had initially anticipated, we had to gather a thesis committee of our own to oversee the progress made throughout the production. After the committee was assembled, the step outline for the story had to be constructed. The step outline would give a scene by scene guide for what was happening in the story, making the actual writing of the script progress much smoother. Throughout these steps, the committee would give feedback. With the step outline approved by the thesis advisor, the committee chair, the next step was moving onto the actual script. This also went through several drafts and also required a final approval. Upon getting that approval, the script would be released for public feedback at the screenings. Typically, although being a screenwriting specialist, I would have had to also film selected scenes from the script to show at the screenings. However, 2020 was a very peculiar year and the global pandemic wrought by COVID-19 did alter the requirements to a degree. The amount of time to complete the project typically would be a year, but the pandemic extended this by a semester. The pandemic also allowed me to be exempt from the excerpt screening, and in its place, I would have to give a brief presentation about my script. To finish the thesis project, the entire process needed to be documented, along with all the research, in this paper.

Chapter 8: Character Creation

I chose to write about the fantasy world that I have been developing for over seven years. However, I needed to condense the scope of my story, and focus on something that was tangible. With such a large world with so many stories to tell at my fingertips, I had to decide which story was worth telling. I had to focus on things that were important to me, and at the top of that list is individuality and self expression. Thus I settled on the story of Amalye Alsean, daughter of the Grand Divine of Caelios, whose entire life is being shaped by what her father wants her to be. Only through an adventure is she able to break free from her father's grasp and establish her own identity.

The first thing that needed to be developed was the continent itself, which as aforementioned, has been in development for the past seven years. It was important to understand the setting, as it plays a large part in the overall story. As the writer, comprehending the history and lore of the world is crucial to portraying how the characters will interact with each other. Each race has a complex and dynamic relationship with the other seven, and that comes forth in their dialogue and actions. Without my own personal understanding of these relationships, the dialogue would be stale and unmotivated. The deities involved in the story are also intrinsically connected to the continent.

The descendants of the Oro kept mostly the same build as their ancestors. Many also remained very artisanal and mercantile as well. The direct descendants of the ancients had very few changes to them. The other three races had more drastic alterations over the centuries. The Maloro are a race of ghoulish humans, constantly in a state of decay, frequently missing chunks of flesh, with exposed muscle and bone. However, because of this, they have become immune to

most diseases, but also are known to spread disease wherever they go. Therefore, they have been exiled to the Raglup Desert, banned from entering most other kingdoms. That is not to say that the Maloro are inherently evil, but rather the society that surrounds them deems them a threat to their way of life, and therefore they are treated as being evil. The Oro that do live side by side with the Maloro have no quarrels with them, maybe other than the stench. However, Gallaroth and Pandario, the main kingdom of the Maloro, have a turbulent history. The Minoro are shorter, pale humans that have been trapped underground for centuries. They have developed the ability to see in complete darkness, but at the cost of bright lights burning their eyes. Being descendants of the crafty Oro though, they make special goggles that block out light while above ground. The Acoro have become amphibious, building their cities in the bay. They are mostly an artistic people, who especially love fashion and dance. They have films over their eyes and webbed digits. All Oro races have a strong sense of community and are quick to defend their own.

The descendants of the Ere, while maintaining a few iconic features, were more drastically different from the ancients. The ancient Ere were tribal and nomadic, and frequently they would be at war with each other. Their descendants, however, were much more peaceful and appreciated knowledge above all else. They replaced tribes with councils, built libraries, studied magic. The other three elven races also experienced mutations. The Alphere were blessed by Falicar, granting them wings and feathery hair. Being granted this boon, they became very devout followers of Falicar. They are renowned for being exceptionally beautiful, and highly arrogant. The Botere live in the dense jungle, so they grew longer limbs and digits. They move gracefully through the trees and form matriarchal tribes. Their skin tone changed to blend in with the trees and foliage around them, allowing them to hunt better in the dense forest. The Malere experienced their mutation due to years of contact with the Maloro. The polluted water and

contaminated food caused by the inherent state of decay of the Maloro brought on mutations to the Ere living amongst them, turning the hue of their skin purple, anywhere from a lavender to an eggplant color. Their inherent connection with magic made one of the mutations replace their blood with mana, allowing them to be some of the strongest magic users in Alinon. All Ere have innate magic capabilities, which sets them apart from the Oro, who have to practice and be taught magic. They also have a much stronger sense of self than the Oro.

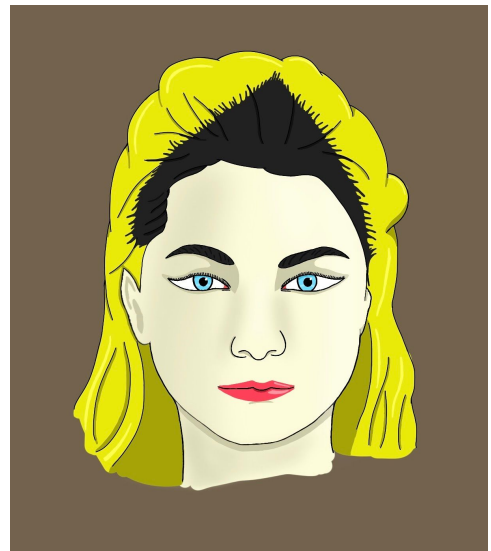
While I wanted this story to encompass all of the eight races, it would have been far too long of a story. I would have liked to have the main character visit at least seven kingdoms, excluding their home kingdom. As I quickly learned, trying to force that within three acts made the story feel distant and unmotivated. So I had to narrow the scope of which kingdoms the character would encounter. I decided that the two most important kingdoms were the Oro and the Ere, the main races. Specifically, the Gallaroth Empire and the Salvi Republic. The Gallaroth Empire is the strongest and largest of the Oro kingdoms. It controls most of the Gaziks Plains, and most importantly, the two rivers that reach from the Calix Mountains to the Ezzeran Ocean. This is a diverse empire that welcomes all races, except the Maloro, due to a history of war between Gallaroth and Pandario. The Salvi Republic is the home of a majority of Ere, and their subspecies. It controls the northern part of the continent, known as the Salvi Hills. The Republic is a sprawling kingdom with small settlements dotting the Hills, but the main city, Sanni, is a bustling metropolis featuring a library and a mage college. These two kingdoms are the most well developed and have the most interesting features. They are also generally benevolent kingdoms that would not be inherently hostile to outsiders.

The Alphere Dominion is also one of the more interesting kingdoms. It is the home of the Alphere and an isolationist kingdom. The Dominion was founded when a tribe of Ere made their

way to the peak of the Calix Mountains and were blessed by Falicar. They revere the peaks as holy grounds and built their kingdom there. They are an extremely religious kingdom, and they are led by the Grand Divine, who has a deep connection with Falicar and spreads his word to the populous. The Grand Divine is not a title that is passed down through a bloodline. Instead, the connection between the next Grand Divine and Falicar is established before they take the throne. The Alphere were not always an isolated kingdom, but the other races caused enough fear to turn them that way. Throughout the years, the Empire and the Republic requested the Dominion assist in their wars and battles. The Alphere, being a peace loving race, wanted no part in these wars, yet the requests turned to demands. The Alphere eventually closed off all communication with the other kingdoms, since they were acting so barbaric. Their viewpoint of the other races became such that they believed only Alphere were civilized, and since they were blessed by a god, they were better than all others.

It is important for me as the writer to understand the history of the Alphere, as well as their relationships with other kingdoms, because the point of view character for this story is Amalye Alsean. She is the daughter of Grand Divine Uryth. Her mother died when she was very young.

Amalye is very book smart, and yet at the same time, naive. The Alphere age slower than humans do, so she has the maturity level of someone in their early twenties, though she is actually in her late thirties. She has spent most of her life going through the same routine. Between religious services and her studies, she does not have much free time. She does not get to express herself or spend time with her friends. She yearns for more



from life than the dreariness of the library and cathedral. Having such a strict upbringing, she desires to be herself, yet at the same time, she knows she must follow the rules or she will be punished. Being so isolated from friends and large groups, she struggles a bit both with how to talk to others and social anxiety in crowds. She prefers her books and her alone time, as she was raised in the library, a habit that was forced upon her through her upbringing. She does desire to experience more, but due to her father and brother, she is incapable of doing so.

Amalye's relationship with her father is a driving factor of her journey. Uryth is a controlling, overbearing father. He wants nothing more than to have his legacy carry on with the title of Grand Divine. He feels that his daughter is a perfect opportunity for him to shape and influence the next divine to continue his legacy. He believes that by keeping his daughter pure and teaching her about the Light he is shaping her to be his successor. Uryth wants what he thinks is best for the Dominion,



and he will do anything to make sure that his people are safe, especially from the barbarians down the mountain. He was taught by Veloe, the Grand Divine before him, the secret history of his people. Uryth had every intention of keeping that history hidden like his predecessors. He is an ambitious man, hoping to be the first divine to be succeeded by their own child. He does care for Amalye though. She reminds him so much of his wife. However, Uryth wants Amalye to be the person he has crafted for her, and gets angry when she tries to be herself. To keep her on the

track that he has set, he uses his late wife as leverage, constantly telling Amalye how she would be disappointed in her actions.

Their relationship in the script can be seen during the first act. Amalye still has that rebellious teenager attitude to the way she interacts with her father. She attempts to get away with whatever small defiant acts that she can. However, the odds are all against her. Her father's controlling personality intimidates all those in the kingdom, and the fact that he is their ruler makes it all the worse. Any defiant acts that she does are quickly reported to Uryth, and along with Mureel, the two quickly apprehend her. Uryth is manipulative and domineering, and mercilessly so. He will utilize Amalye's late mother as psychological warfare, making Amalye feel guilty for her actions and weakening her will.

Amalye's mentor character had to be someone who would know the continent well, in order to show her that life down the mountain is not as bad as she expected it to be. For this role, I chose Caldwell, a grumpy middle-aged Oro who had recently served in a decade long war. Though he had not made it far up the ranks, he had decided to retire from being a knight to become a blacksmith. It is a less deadly profession, but still keeps him



in touch with his roots. He has seen a good portion of the continent, and knows generally what to expect while traveling. He can hold his own in any fight, as all Oro knights are trained to be

exceptional fighters. Throughout the story, Caldwell takes up the position of Amalye's surrogate father. Caldwell teaches her how to be polite and treat others with respect. He shows her that not everyone is the barbaric monster she expects them to be. Caldwell does not believe in all the religious aspects that Amalye follows. As most people, he believes that the gods abandoned Alinon long ago. Caldwell starts his journey with her only as a job. He is in it for the money and nothing more, except maybe one last adventure. However, as they go on this adventure, he begins to grow attached to her. He wants to see grow and he becomes proud of what she accomplishes. In the end, he treats her as the daughter he never had.

The other two main allies that Amalye befriends are Durin and Kat'Alia. Durin, the Ere anthropologist, is a loquacious elf who can be very nosy. He lacks an understanding of personal space and no question is too awkward for him to ask. The only thing that embarrasses him is minor forgetful mistakes. He is also a mage, though a weak one. He cares more about how spells affect different races than using them. He is a very friendly Ere, but overly friendly, which tends to push people away. He also acts as a bit of comedic relief, with his relationship with Caldwell. Kat'Alia is a Botere dryad from the Alia tribe. Being a dryad, she was rejected by the druids, the women of the tribe, because she could not perform the same types of magic. She also was not accepted into the hunters, for only men do the hunting. She learned her magic and practiced her archery on her own, learning to be self dependent from an early age. She wishes to be part of the tribe, and stays close to them when she can, but she has been excommunicated. This has made her a bit more standoffish and quiet, but she also has a desire for companionship.

As Amalye made friends during her adventure, she also made a few enemies. These enemies come in the form of Harx and Arthin. Harx is a Maloro and an agent of Carsino. His task was to cause chaos and disruption in Gallaroth, but upon discovering Amalye, Carsino

tasked him with capturing her. Like most Maloro, he is very conniving, but does not have the intelligence to pull off his schemes. He is loyal to Carsino, and will die to accomplish his master's plans. He is smart enough to know that he cannot attack her in the walls of Gallaroth, even though he could match Caldwell and might get her. The guards would surely kill him before he could escape. He has the strength to do what is necessary, but not the brain or the finesse. That is where Arthin comes into play. The Malere mob boss is both smart and dextrous. The Malere are known for running organized crime syndicates, and Arthin is one of the best. Not only does she have henchmen in her service, she also commands a flock of corvids that allow her to see through their eyes. She is much more level headed than Harx, able to see the bigger picture. For her, capturing Amalye is not a way to appease Carsino, she could not care less about him. This is an opportunity to really make a name for herself and get a huge ransom to boot.

The two deities play a big role in the script as well. They are hugely influential in characters and how they act. They have their own story happening outside of the knowledge of mortals. The two cyclical deities are in a battle, balancing out life and death. Neither of the two should defeat the other without horrible consequences for the mortals. The gods draw power from their worshippers and their champions are the ones who help spread their name. Falicar has become a weaker deity because of this. His worship has become exclusive to the Alphere due to their isolation. Falicar is the god of life and light, and so his teachings are known as The Light. Falicar wants to spread his teachings throughout the lands to increase his power. His connection with Amalye cannot be fully established while she is near Uryth, because he is the Grand Divine. His counterpart, Carsino, seeks to destroy the mortal plane, creating his own continent of death and decay. He is the god of pestilence and his worshippers, the Maloro, are results of his interference in the past. Similarly to how the Alphere are Falicar's blessed race, the Maloro are

Carsino's cursed race. If Amalye is captured and sacrificed in Carsino's name, he will gain a huge advantage over Falicar. With Falicar already in a weakened state, Carsino would dominate him in their next battle.

Wants and needs are an important part of any story as they influence our characters' actions. Wants are external, in the sense that we will typically openly tell others what it is that we desire. Needs are more internal, often to the point that we are unaware ourselves of what it is that we truly require. So it was important that I determine what each character needed, as opposed to what they wanted. Amalye expresses that she wants to leave Caelios and experience more of what life has to offer, but what she needs is much deeper. She needs to escape her father, who has been shaping her life for years through emotional abuse. Unless she is able to stand against her father, she will never be her own person. Similarly, Uryth wants his daughter to succeed him as the next Grand Divine and continue his legacy, but what drives him is this internal need to control everything. Whenever anyone speaks against him, it drives him mad. Caldwell claims that all he wants is the money, but inside, he needs is that fatherly connection with Amalye.

Chapter 9: The Writing Process

The first and most important task when writing any script is to outline the events. This step outline is an especially crucial part in proper planning and execution of writing a feature length script. Writing this outline took an entire semester on its own. It was really the first moment that I had to really describe in detail what was going to happen throughout the story. Before this, I had a loose idea of how I wanted the story to progress, but without any real substance to the individual moments and scenes. However, as I worked my way through the step outline, I perhaps focused too much on describing characters and their locations, something I frequently do. I highly enjoy describing my characters in detail, which is maybe less important in the step outline.

Another slight hiccup with the step outline was giving Amalye a strong enough reason to leave her home. In my opinion, the emotional and psychological abuse from her father was more than enough of a reason for her to leave. However, Franklin Deese, my thesis advisor, suggested I have her run away from an arranged marriage. To me, that was cliché and overdone. Also, it is not within her culture to place an importance on marriage, and especially arrange them. I also did not want this to be a romantic piece in any sense. I did not want Amalye running or chasing after a boy, or girl. So I came up with the MacGuffin of Falicar's Mace. I use the term MacGuffin here because the physical mace that Amalye finds is really nothing more than a tool to facilitate her journey, when she is in fact Falicar's Mace. The actual mace is a more metaphorical weapon. Once she proves herself worthy of Falicar, she becomes his mace, by which the corruption in his church will be eradicated and the Light will spread throughout the land.

The step outline went through a few drafts, and even in its final draft, it lacked some level of clarity and detail that I had to bring out in the actual writing of the script. With screenwriting, you only describe what the viewer hears and sees, which comes in the forms of dialogue, actions, sound effects. I personally avoid including any dialogue in the step outline, and I only describe actions in vaguely what they are accomplishing rather than what the actual action may be. Thus, when I switched to writing the actual script, I had a bit more work to polish the scenes. I also had to add scenes that were not included in the step outline, as I felt a transition scene was needed or some details in the step outline were unclear and needed further explaining.

In some instances, I also felt like adding a little foreshadowing and exposition. Exposition in a piece like this is a tricky thing to incorporate. You have such a large, developed world with intricacies and history that would require a few hour long documentary on each kingdom to really understand. I had the unique challenge of choosing what information about the world needed to be included, and furthermore, what information about each of the characters needed to be explained. Is it important to include how Amalye's mother died? Not as much as the fact that she is dead. And how to show that Uryth manipulates Falicar's teachings to accomplish his own goals? That is a highly important piece of exposition, and one that cannot just be stated. It would diminish its impact if a character just stated that Uryth is an evil mastermind. Instead, it can be seen in the difference between the way Amalye talks about the Light in comparison to the way Uryth describes the "barbarians". Exposition is always a touchy subject when it comes to films, and even more so when it is a large fantasy world like this. You do not want to have characters just spouting exposition to the audience, but yet it often needs to be included in some way. This is usually best done through the way characters act and speak and especially the subtext of their dialogue.

Writing the script was coming along nicely in the spring semester. I had written over half of the story before spring break, and I was on track to finish it and film a scene or two. However, that was when the pandemic changed the course of the semester. The campus was shut down and everyone was forced to go home. Along with the depression brought on by everything coming to a halt, this also meant that I could no longer access campus for film equipment, studio space, or faculty members. An extension into the fall semester was graciously offered to the thesis students, and I quickly accepted that offer. The extra time would allow me to recover and further polish the story. And so I spent the summer refining the story and finishing the last act and a half into what I consider to be a rather solid feature length screenplay.

Chapter 10: Feedback

After the presentation, I received a lot of helpful comments and feedback. The most common of which was that, while the concepts and ideas presented were intriguing and people wanted to read the script or see it turned into a film, the presentation itself was hard to follow. I received this comment from Professors Mary Jaye Blanchard, Ambarien Alqadar, and Amy Adrion. This is completely understandable as there was a lot of information being conveyed without any visual representation or diagram. This has not been an uncommon problem with my work. Either I leave out information or expect others to be as familiar with my world as I am, or I include too much information that bogs down the finer points and obscures the premise of the story. If I were to go back and do the presentation again, I would include a powerpoint that covered the various steps of the hero's journey, reordered to match the plot points of my story. While I am not a great artist, I would have tried to incorporate more portraits and images from the story and perhaps a map of the continent. I agree that some visuals would have helped to engage the audience and help them follow along with what I was saying.

Another critique of the story was that Amalye's reason for leaving home was not strong enough. This was a critique that I had many times throughout the creation of this story, from the proposal phase, into the outline, and even in the final presentation. Early on, I thought that people were just not understanding that her father was abusive and she wanted to get out of that relationship. However, Professor Mark Reisch commented that her abusive relationship with her father seemed to be a common thing for her, so without some drastic change, why does she decide to leave when she does. This I had not considered before, and was probably what others were trying to get at as well. In a future revision of the script, I would definitely emphasize this

moment more and give her a stronger reason to flee home. Professor Frank Deese, my committee chair, also mentioned that there needs to be a stronger call to adventure, and I would incorporate that here. I would have the night that she runs away be a combination of the worst that Uryth has treated her and she prays to Falicar for guidance, and he tells her to escape.

One question from the presentation that really caught my attention was what comes next for this story. Professor Don Casper commented on how my story to him felt like the narrative to a video game, even before I started discussing how influential video games were for my writing. Professor Tom Gasek commented after the presentation, “Great World Building Kyle . . . games might be your future. Keep that imagination alive and curious. Congratulations!” Professor Don Casper also mentioned the possibility of turning it into a novel series. Both of these are highly enticing to me, and ideas that I have definitely had in the past and would like to pursue. I am unfamiliar with game design, but I know of people who are and could contact them with potential ways for me to turn this into a game. I do have every intention of making this story, as well as the many other stories that take place on this continent, into novels. I feel like they would allow me to go more into details, like I enjoy doing, and describe things that movies scripts force me to remove. Frank Deese also encourages converting this story and my others into novels. So I believe the next step for this story is to turn it into a novel, a step that will certainly take a long time to accomplish.

There were several comments on the story and script as well from my thesis committee. Deese suggested removing some content to get the script under one hundred thirty pages, preferably under one hundred twenty even. This can certainly be done, and also accomplish another of his comments. I have been known to break the rule in screenwriting of only including what the viewer can see and hear, because I tend to include information that I think is pertinent

but not necessarily able to be shown. For example, describing each of the races so that the reader will have a general understanding of what to picture when I say Minoro or Ere. I could remove these descriptions, reducing the script to only what we can see and hear, and that would also lower the page count.

A comment from Professor Sarah Thompson, a committee member and professor in the School of Art, pointed out the relationship between good and beauty and evil and ugliness. This is a common trope in fairy tales. Typically you have the Prince Charming character rescuing the pretty princess from the ugly witch. Villains are referred to as hags, trolls, goblins, or gremlins. I was trying to play with this trope in my story by having the attractive Alphere and hideous Maloro. This is also just generally a physiological aspect of being an Alphere or a Maloro. It may be a personal bias of mine that all birds are beautiful creatures, and the Alphere are all based on birds. It may not be obvious, but their hair and wing coloration is based on a bird that I felt portrayed them. For example, Amalye is modeled after a goldfinch, because I thought it suited her personality, and that is why her hair is black then turns gold. Uryth is a king vulture. Ouldue is a barn owl. Izana is a hummingbird. However, despite their beauty, their personalities tend to be ugly. Uryth is controlling and abusive and the true villain of the story. The Maloro on the other hand are repulsive because of the fact that they are in a constant state of decay. Skin peeling away, chunks of flesh missing, and rotting teeth are just some of the common attributes of a Maloro. While Harx is a villain, not all Maloro are evil. While the Alphere isolate themselves, the Maloro tend to be ostracized. I was trying to play with the difference between people who choose to be alone versus people who are forced to be.

Another comment, both from Deese and Thompson, concerned the use of the term “race”. Both were concerned about the fact that the word carries with it a history revolving around a

different use of the word. It is hard to find a more suitable word. Species could work, when describing their physiological aspects, and maybe species is the more appropriate terminology to use. Race as we use it in real life is not the same as the term is used in fantasy. It is more along the lines of how we say the human race. Even science fiction uses the term race to identify a species of alien. In *Star Wars*, there is the Bothan race or the Mon Calimari. In *Dungeon and Dragons*, there are many species that are again identified as races. The elves, halflings, dwarves, orcs, dragonborn are all races that are then broken down into subraces. General assumptions can be made about these races due to the fact that their physical attributes are often tied to their species. A dwarf tends to be hardy due to ancestry of living underground. A dragonborn tends to be prideful because of their draconic blood. Are these racist stereotypes created by Wizards of the Coast that ought to be condemned? I am not so sure, because they are established by the cultural norms of these races. We are told that a typical dwarven city is industrious and that the dwarves like to work with their hands and brew particularly good ale. To also address one of Thompson's other critiques, separating racial descriptions from cultural ones, the Alphere do act the way the Alphere do because all Alphere are raised a specific way. It would not be so much racially inherent, if there were other kingdoms of Alphere with a differing culture. Caelios is the only existing Alphere city even, so for the Alphere, their culture is quite inherent of their race. The Maloro have a drastically different history. Due to their physical traits, they were ostracized to the desert. Some moved to other parts of the continent, but most stayed in the desert, where they established their own kingdom fueled by their resentment of the other races. This was something that was brought up during a previous project, humanizing the Maloro and not making them evil for the sake of being evil. It is society that has driven them to be this way. As such,

their culture has evolved to be survival of the fittest, and in their cities, only the strongest will survive. Maloro who live elsewhere do not experience that same harsh environment.

Deese commented that Caldwell's arc needed to be a stronger one and in general he needed to be more of an evolving character. While Caldwell does change from a more stern and unsympathetic character to a more loving and encouraging character, it does feel rather abrupt in the script. My initial attempt was to have Caldwell bond with Amalye during the trip from Gallaroth to Sanni, so upon reaching Sanni, he would be more defensive of her. That is a rather quick change that should be drawn out until they reach the temple in the valley. I do not want Caldwell to be a character who goes from being irreligious to a devout man. The plan was always for him to stay indifferent from a religious standpoint, but believing in Amalye and supporting her, like her real father would not. There was some confusion early on, from a few people, including Deese, that Caldwell was potentially a love interest. That was also never intentional. The character was intended to be a surrogate father who would support Amalye and drive her to grow and improve.

Chapter 11: Conclusion

I would say that this was a highly successful thesis project. Though there were hiccups and flaws, especially with the global pandemic, a quality feature length script was written. I have every intention of having this script grow and develop throughout the future iterations. Eventually, I will adapt it into a novel format, where I will hopefully be able to address some of the concerns and iron out the problem areas. I accomplished the goals that I set out to achieve. I received many praises for my creativity and development of this world. It is encouraging to know that people want to learn about the continent of Alinon and I can only hope that others will as well. One day maybe Alinon will be as popular as Middle Earth or Faerun, synonymous with high fantasy. That is a goal I will certainly strive to achieve and this was a great first step towards that future.

Appendix: Thesis Proposal

Core Emotional Story:

Escaping a controlling father, a naive daughter learns the truths of the world as she goes on a journey of self-discovery.

Treatment:

Amayle is the young princess of an isolationist theocratic kingdom, located high in the mountains, that worships Falicar, the god of light. Her father is Uryth, the current Grand Divine. The title of Grand Divine is not a hereditary one, but rather one passed down to Falicar's chosen herald. Uryth keeps the other races away, as they are seen as impure, as has been the custom for decades. He also imposes strict and harsh rules on Amalye. Therefore, Amalye spends almost all her time dedicated to studying the books in the library. She finds a dusty, worn book that talks about the early days of their kingdom. There is a mace depicted in the book that supposedly was object used to unite the kingdoms in peace. However, when Uryth finds out about this book, he destroys it, saying it is heretical, and tells her she must atone. At night, Amalye is haunted by blurry images of a six winged human and the mace. She is unable to see it clearly and there is a muffled voice speaking to her. Concerned about the dreams, she talks to her father, who tells her they are nonsense and she must continue to pray for forgiveness. Aggravated with her father, she runs away, hoping to find answers elsewhere. Uryth worries that something might have happened to Amalye and sends her older brother, Mureel, to find her and bring her back.

The people of the kingdom down the mountain openly welcome Amalye. She is confused, because she had grown up being told they were barbarous heathens. However, Amalye is demanding, thinking that her status of princess grants her privilege over these people. Amalye's visions also become clearer and the voice less muffled, though there is still some interference. She understands that she must travel to the city of Sanni, but why is unclear. Mureel arrives in the village, so Amalye flees hidden in the back of a merchant wagon. She arrives at the capital of the kingdom, where she attempts to find someone to take her to Sanni. In the capital, people are far less receptive. She eventually meets a grisly blacksmith named Caldwell and demands his attention. Initially, Caldwell is against escorting her, but once she offers him her golden necklace, he agrees to help.

However, Amalye's presence draws attention from a less desirable kingdom. Harx is a spy that has infiltrated the capital and has been following Amalye. He returns to his kingdom to spread the word. The king prays to Carsino, the god of death, who tells them that Amalye leaving the kingdom has weakened it and leaves it unprotected by Falicar. The king musters his forces to attack the mountain kingdom, and tasks Harx with capturing Amalye.

Amalye and Caldwell travel to Sanni, where they meet a scholar and anthropologist named Durin. Durin shows Amalye around Sanni and shows them any documentation they have on her people's ancestry. She asks him about the gilded mace, but he is unfamiliar. He does however know that a nearby valley has engravings of her ancestors. Meanwhile, Caldwell learns

that Amalye is a princess when he meets Mureel in a tavern. When Mureel discovers that Amalye is in the city, he attempts to capture her, but with the help of Durin, they escape.

In the valley, Amalye learns a lot about her ancestors. By now, her visions are much more clear and she learns that she is to be Falicar's chosen. Falicar wants her to help spread The Light to the other kingdoms. The mace is not important. However, she should hurry back to her kingdom, for they are in danger. Leaving the valley, they are diverted into the forest when Harx attacks them. Upon leaving the forest, after having trouble navigating the dense woods, they run into an encounter with both Mureel and Harx. The fight is chaotic, and Amalye takes her opportunity to escape.

They travel up the mountain, but Amalye's friends are not allowed entrance. She argues with her father about how he hid their past and his betrayal of Falicar. During their argument, the city becomes under siege by Harx's people. Amalye's friends are already outside fighting them off, and she joins them. A divine light shines on her, imbuing her with incredible strength. She drives away the invaders. Her people are in awe of her, and claim her as the new Grand Divine.

Timeline

	Aug	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May
Step Outline										
1st Act										
2nd Act										
3rd Act										
1st Draft										
Revising										
2nd Draft										
Final Draft										
Dramatic Reading										
Editing										
Present										

Blue: in progress

Red: finished

Budget

Item	Quantity	Price	Total
Software			
Final Draft		In Kind	\$0
Adobe Premiere		In Kind	\$0
Cast			
Actors	3 for 2 days	\$75	\$450
Crew			
D.P.	1 for 2 days	\$50	\$100
Sound Mixer	1 for 2 days	\$20	\$40
Equipment			
Camera		In Kind	\$0
Lightning		In Kind	\$0
702		In Kind	\$0
Subtotal			\$590
Contingency (15%)			\$90
Total			\$680

Appendix: Thesis Presentation

My thesis project is a feature length movie script that takes place in a fantasy world that I have developed. It follows the story of Amalye Alsean, the daughter of the head of a zealous isolationist kingdom. At the start of her story, she is a character towards whom we feel sympathetic. Her mother, Yeeala, is deceased and her father, Uryth, imposes very strict rules upon her. Her brother and his city guards seemingly watch her every move. She is treated like a child and forced to follow her father's every order. She spends all of her time trapped in the library being watched by another of her father's henchmen, Ouldue. She has been stuck trying to be the person her father has crafted for her, when she so desires to have friends and have fun.

In the culture of the Alphere Dominion, their god, Falicar, speaks directly to their religious leader who is also their political leader. This is not a rulership that is passed down a bloodline like a king or an emperor. Instead, this is passed down to whomever Falicar chooses to speak. This person is known as the Grand Divine. Uryth sees his daughter as the opportunity to establish the first bloodline rule of Grand Divines. He manipulates her through psychological abuse, telling her that she is failing both him and her late mother. He hopes that by shaping her to be more like him, she will be chosen as the next Grand Divine and continue his legacy. However, he is pushing her away and fueling her desire to leave the Dominion.

Amalye discovers a book that contains knowledge forbidden from the Dominion by the Grand Divine. It reveals a history that is contradictory to what the teachings of the Light have been spreading. The Alphere believe they were created by Falicar in his image, but this journal tells of an Ere tribe that trekked up the Calix Mountains and were blessed by Falicar, becoming the Alphere. This leads Amalye to question everything her father has been preaching. Despite being contradictory to the teachings of her faith, something feels right about this alternative history. She has a dream that night which further convinces her of this truth. She confronts Uryth about this alternative history, which causes him to snap on her. She decides she has had enough of being treated like a child, so she runs away from the Dominion.

Leaving the Dominion reveals more to Amalye than she could have expected, and it starts her hero journey. Her naivety and privilege provide obstacles as she traverses this unfamiliar world. She must learn how to take care of herself without the help of her servants and getting everything she wants. Luckily she finds a mentor in an old veteran knight, Caldwell. Caldwell may be cynical and reserved, but he is willing to offer his services for the right price. At first, this relationship starts as a simple way for him to earn money, but as he travels with Amalye, he grows fond of her, in a fatherly way. He helps teach her that everyone is not the savage heathens that the Dominion would have her believe. He also provides her with the paternal guidance and love that Uryth would never offer. Her journey leads her to discover the truth about the world that has been kept from her people for generations.

During this journey, Falicar calls out to Amalye several times, helping lead her to unleash her full potential. The forbidden knowledge that Amalye learned talked about a mace, and Falicar wishes for Amalye to obtain this mace. Her quest for this mace pushes her to better herself and embrace the true nature of his teachings. Amalye does acquire a physical mace, but it is old and decrepit and she accidentally breaks it. The actual mace is a metaphor for Falicar's approval and power being bestowed upon a mortal. Amalye also acquires the metaphorical mace when she learns to accept everyone, believe in herself, and stand up to protect those for whom she cares.

Amalye returns to Caelios to find it in a worse state than she had left. Uryth, distraught from losing his daughter, was planning to start a war with the Gallaroth Empire. However, her return does not stop those plans. Driven mad, he blames them for stealing his daughter and corrupting her mind. Amalye, knowing the truth and with the help of Falicar, convinces the Dominion that the world is not as bad as they have been taught. It is time for the teachings of the Light to be spread to all people and not kept isolated on the mountain tops and time for them to embrace everyone.

My project was an exercise incorporating the hero's journey and world building. For the hero's journey aspect of this project, I looked at Joseph's Campbell's monomyth through the lens of Christopher Vogler. Vogler updates and modernizes Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* condensing Campbell's many steps into twelve steps in his novel, *The Writer's Journey*. The hero's journey is a staple

when it comes to the fantasy genre. Movies such as *The Lord of the Rings* and *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope* follow the stages of the hero's journey almost step by step. These steps provide an outline that creates many of the stories from classic folklore, which is why *The Lord of the Rings* follows these steps. It is also important when utilizing this outline, or any outline, to alter it to better suit the needs of your story. If you follow the twelve steps of the hero's journey exactly as they are written, you will create cookie cutter stories that become highly predictable. A predictable story will lose the interest of the audience quickly, no matter how intriguing the concept may be. Therefore I had to determine how to change up the steps to accommodate my story. For example, Amalye's mentor could not be anyone from her home, because everyone in the Dominion would be as narrow minded and unfamiliar with the continent as she is. So she would have to cross the threshold from the known comfortable world to the unknown extraordinary world before meeting her mentor. Another step that I changed was the seizing of the sword. Vogler places this step right after the ordeal, while the hero is still within the inmost cave. It is the step when the hero acquires that which they set out for at the start of their journey. It is the elixir with which they are to return home. This is an important step and one that cannot be removed from the story all together, because it determines whether the hero has accomplished their task or failed. I intentionally make it appear as though this event occurs in the inmost cave, the ancient temple where Amalye destroys the decrepit mace. However, this is supposed to be misleading to make the audience believe that she has failed her quest, and she will return home empty handed, with nothing but memories of her journey. However it is during her trip back home that she gets the reward and becomes Falicar's Mace.

When it comes to the world building aspects of this project, I could talk for hours alone on how I have developed this world. World building has always been one of my biggest interests and something that has always caught my attention, when done well. Two of the most influential pieces that have world building at their core are *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim*. While video games seem to be controversial as to their inclusion in the art world, I personally believe that video games are as much a form of art as any other medium, but a whole dissertation could be written on that alone. Without Tolkien, modern fantasy as we know it would not exist. Tolkien compiled folklore and fairy tales, taking

the common aspects of each story and creating an entirely new world of diverse cultures and people. Any fantasy piece will owe inspiration to Tolkien. *The Elder Scrolls* is one such series, and has been a huge influence in my own work. It has good world building that really immerses the viewer, or in this case the player, into the world, and it accomplishes this by throwing you right in the action so you get to experience the world first hand. This also can happen in films by creating a main character that the audience will have rooting interest in, so that the audience can experience this world through that character. In *Lord of the Rings*, you get to experience Middle Earth through the eyes of Frodo. He has never left the Shire before and is therefore as unfamiliar with the world around him as we are. In my story, this happens through Amalye. Having been isolated and kept away from the rest of the continent, she knows only what Uryth has allowed her to learn about the other peoples. This allows her to learn their truths and discover Alinon at the same pace as the audience does.

There is a lot of history and lore to the continent of Alinon that would be impossible to incorporate into one feature length script, and so I had to focus on only the information pertinent to my story. The history that she, as well as the audience, discovers is how the Alphere became so isolated from the rest of the continent and where their superiority complex started. One of the hardest things to accomplish when working with fantasy and world building is incorporating exposition. There was so much that I wanted to put into this story, but I knew I had to keep it within a page constraint, and therefore had to keep the exposition limited to what was important to the story. This exposition also had to be included in such a way that it was not just blatant spouting of information needed by the audience. In many cases, this information was given by Durin, the scholarly elf, to inform Amalye of what really has been happening. The history that the Grand Divines have been spreading to the Alphere is one that they crafted to enforce their agenda of fearmongering and control, an entirely different history than what really occurred.

FREEDOM OF THE LIGHT

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INT. LIGHT CATHEDRAL - DAY

In a large gothic style cathedral, a race of winged elves, known as ALPHERE, sit in lined pews facing a large stained glass portrait of a six winged Alphere, the image of FALICAR, the god of Light and life. The cathedral is adorned with many golden decorations, embroidered tapestries, and candles. In front of the window is an ornate altar with a band of sculpted feathers.

In the transept stands URYTH, the Grand Divine. The top half of his wings white, and the bottom half black. He wears several layers of gold embroidered vestments, which include a hood and a mask that covers his face.

There are three carved thrones near the altar. The middle, largest throne is empty, but the other two are occupied.

On the left sits MUREEL, wearing fewer vestments than Uryth and a gilded chestplate. His wings are light brown with darker brown tips. He sits attentive.

On the right is AMALYE, who wears the least impressive vestments of the three, but also an excessive amount of jewelry. Her wings are black with a few random white streaks. She rests her head on her hand.

URYTH

Through the divine power of
Falicar, we have been blessed. We
owe all that we are to His grace.
By following in the teachings of
the Light, we have risen from the
barbarians and claimed our rightful
position. This is the will of our
god.

Amalye struggles to keep herself awake. She looks around the cathedral. The Alphere in the pews all wear ceremonial masks too.

URYTH (CONT'D)

Blessings of Falicar upon all of
you, for you are His chosen. Avoid
the darkness, walk always in the
Light.

Upon saying this, the stained glass depiction of Falicar shines more brilliantly than before, casting its light upon Uryth.

CONGREGATION

Praise Falicar!

INT. CATHEDRAL CHAMBER - DAY

Uryth, Mureel, and Amalye enter a stone chamber filled with cabinets. Uryth opens up one of the cabinets and begins to take off his vestments. Underneath the several layers are what looks like more vestments, however he does not remove those.

MUREEL

You were spectacular today, father.

Mureel approaches another cabinet.

Uryth takes off his mask, revealing his elderly face. He appears to be early 70s, in human years. His hair is thinned, feathery, and black.

URYTH

Yes. Falicar's word flowed through
me stronger today than ever before.

Mureel takes off his mask, revealing a chiseled face with short white and brown hair. He appears early 30s. He removes his ceremonial vestments.

URYTH (CONT'D)

There is something big coming. I
can feel it. Falicar has big plans
for me.

Amalye takes off her mask. Her face is youthful and her hair starts black, but turns golden blonde. She looks no older than 20.

She removes her ceremonial vestments and rolls her eyes.

URYTH (CONT'D)

Make sure, my children, that you
listen to His words. Be sure to pay
attention to the ceremonies.

Uryth makes a slight glare at Amalye.

MUREEL

I always pay attention, father.

AMALYE

(sarcastically)
I couldn't miss it.

There is a knock on the door, and a few seconds later, the door opens and VELOE enters. Veloe has thin grey hair, with thicker white stripes. His wings are light grey. If Uryth is 70, Veloe is easily over 100.

VELOE
Grand Divine, if I may have a word?

URYTH
Of course, Veloe. I will be out in
a moment.

Veloe shuts the door, and Uryth turns to his children.

URYTH (CONT'D)
Be home before dark. Do not want to
tempt the beasts. Amalye, go
straight to the library.

AMALYE
What? But my friends were going to
get together.

URYTH
Your studies are more important.
You are to go to the library.

AMALYE
This isn't fair!

URYTH
I will not hear another word.

Uryth leaves. Mureel steps up to Amalye.

MUREEL
You should really listen to him.
You could be the next Divine if you
follow in his steps. He is doing
what is best for you.

Amalye crosses her arms and gives him a look.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Amalye enters the foyer of the library. It is a modest library, but rather than sprawling horizontally, it is built vertically, with huge bookshelves that reach up to the ceiling. There are a few tables, some spotless, other cluttered with books.

As Amalye walks in, OULDUE, a frail elderly Alphere, easily 80, with glasses flies down from shelves. He has light brown hair with white streaks in the front and his wings are light brown and black. He stumbles a bit as he lands in front of Amalye.

OULDUE

Lady Alsean, welcome. What may I interest you in today?

Amalye walks past him, and begins browsing the books on the lowest shelves. Ouldue walks with her after she passes.

OULDUE (CONT'D)

I recently received a new manuscript from Gileo. I have yet to read through it myself, but the Grand Divine has approved of it.

Amalye's dull expression lights up.

AMALYE

I thought he was done writing. It has been thirty years since his *Treaties on the Light*.

OULDUE

He is young still. I would not be surprised if he still has more in him.

AMALYE

Where is it? What is it called?

Ouldue starts walking to a desk, and Amalye follows.

OULDUE

It is titled *The Early Days of Caelios*, a classical take on our history. I have heard his artwork is phenomenal. I have it here at my desk.

Ouldue picks up the book. The cover has a picture of light shining down upon the peak of a mountain. Amalye snatches the book and flies to one of the tables.

OULDUE (CONT'D)

Enjoy!

Amalye opens the book. The pages are filled with pictures. The first shows Falicar creating the Alphere from the light of the sun.

As Amalye reads, the pages come to life around her. Falicar takes balls of light and fashion them into Alphere. The Alphere rejoice, praising their god.

They look down, and below them are humanoid beasts fighting each other. They tear into each other with claws and fangs.

The Alphere construct a beautiful city atop a mountain, while the beasts below continue to fight.

The Alphere enjoy their life, praying to Falicar and experience a peaceful existence. Meanwhile, the beasts below are all dead, but one, who draws its final breath, reaching for the mountains.

Amalye has reached the last page of the illuminated manuscript.

Falicar stands guard outside Caelios, wielding his golden mace.

CARSINO, a three horned centaur demon, approaches from below. A plague of locusts swarm around him. A wake of death trails behind him. Carsino charges Falicar with his claws. Falicar readies his mace.

As Carsino nears, Falicar swings. The mace connects with Carsino's claws. He reels in pain. Carsino swings back, but Falicar dodges.

Falicar flies into the air and brings his mace down onto Carinso's head, crushing his skull.

As Amalye reaches the end of the manuscript, the images fade from existence. A small, leather-bound journal slips out from the last page. She picks up the journal.

AMALYE

What is this?

She thumbs through the pages. The text is written differently, and the book is more text heavy than pictures.

AMALYE (CONT'D)

(whispers)

We had to climb the mountain to
avoid the Yunatu.

Once again the text flairs to life around her. Wingless elves hike up a rocky mountainside, leading large six-legged shelled lizards. The lizards struggle to walk. The elves leave them behind.

The elves enter a cave. A gryphon lies in a nest. Behind the gryphon, a golden mace lies on a stone altar.

OBEX, a male elf, 50s, approaches the beast with a handful of WARRIORS. They ready spears.

PILIA, a female elf, 50s, kneels behind them, tending to a WOUNDED ELF.

PILIA
Obie, be careful!

The gryphon attacks. It is as nimble and graceful as it is horrifying and deadly. It flies around, swooping to strike occasionally.

The warriors do their best to fight. They hurl their spears and poke at the gryphon when possible, but they mostly spend their time avoiding its attacks.

The gryphon flies at Pilia.

OBEX
Pilia!

Obex jumps in front of the gryphon, taking the blow.

Pilia grabs him, as he clutches his chest. Blood seeps from under his hand.

OBEX (CONT'D)
I'll be okay. Get the others to
safety.

Other elves come to take care of Obex. Pilia runs for the mace.

Pilia takes the mace from the altar and it shines brightly.

Amalye looks up from the journal, and to the manuscript on the table. The sketch of the mace appears identical to the painting of Falicar's mace. She flips the page of the journal.

Pilia hits the wing of the gryphon with the mace. It falls to the ground. It charges at her on foot, but she smacks the mace into its chest. A loud crunch is heard as the beast topples over.

A bright light engulfs the room. Falicar's figure can be vaguely seen.

FALICAR
You invade my cave. Slay my sacred
beast. Wield my sacred mace. Such
actions do not go without
consequence.

The warriors rush over to Pilia. They stand ready to fight.

The light dims, revealing Falicar's figure.

FALICAR (CONT'D)
I wish to bestow my blessings upon
you, grant you the boons of my
faithful...

The images suddenly vanish as Amalye slams the book shut.

OULDUE (O.S.)
Lady Alsean?

Ouldue rushes to the table.

OULDUE (CONT'D)
Are you all right, my lady?

He looks down and sees the journal.

OULDUE (CONT'D)
What is that? Where did you find
it?

AMALYE
Is this true?

OULDUE
What do you mean? The Gileo
manuscript? Well, he may have taken
some artistic liberties, but Grand
Divine Alsean did approve it.

Amalye stands up and cuts him off. She waves the journal.

AMALYE
This says we use to be barbarians.
We use to live down there!

OULDUE
That is simply preposterous. We are
blessed by Falicar. Created in his
Light. Where did you find that
book?

AMALYE
What if it is true though? We could
be related to those disgusting
monsters.

Ouldue places a hand on Amalye's shoulder

OULDUE
My dear, it is improbable, nay,
impossible that we have any
connection to the lesser races.
(MORE)

OULDUE (CONT'D)

If you go around spreading this nonsense to others, they will think you insane. I think it would be best if you give my the book.

Ouldue reaches his hand out. At that moment, the front door of the library opens and three Alphere enter.

IZANA is about the same age as Amalye, wearing silken robes. Her hair is speckled green and her wings are green and black.

SORIAL appears younger than Amalye, wearing a gown. Her short hair and wings are pure white. As beautiful as Amalye is, she pales in comparison to Sorial.

ZAZIMAL is the same age as Amalye, wearing loose robes. He has white hair with grey feathers that stand straight up and his wings are dark grey.

Zazimal has his arm around Sorial as they walk towards Amalye's table. Izana rushes ahead.

IZANA

Amalye! You're late.

SORIAL

Told you she would have her nose in a book.

AMALYE

Only because my father forces me to.

ZAZIMAL

We're going to the Peaks. Are you joining us?

SORIAL

Or would you rather stay here with the librarian?

AMALYE

I shouldn't. Father wants us back for dinner.

IZANA

Live a little, princess. You're wasting your life in here.

OULDUE

Nonsense. Her studies are quite important.

Zazimal cuts him off.

ZAZIMAL

We are going with or without you.
Your choice.

Zazimal, Sorial, and Izana turn to leave. Amalye shoves the journal into her robes and chases after them. Ouldue shakes his head.

EXT. CAELIOS - WALL - NIGHT

Mureel walks the stone wall surrounding Caelios with an ALPHERE GUARD.

MUREEL

We need to keep an eye on the east side primarily. That is where barbarians are most likely to approach.

Mureel's voice trails off as he leaves sight.

Zazimal suddenly flies onto the wall, and waves. Amalye, Sorial, and Izana fly to him quickly. They look over the wall before jumping over.

EXT. PEAKS - NIGHT

The four friends arrive at the zenith of the mountain. There is a single tree growing at the peak. Between the clouds below them, small settlements and castles dot the landscape, like ants on the ground. On their left there is a massive jungle, so dense that it looks like moss growing on a rock. The moons and stars are the only things above them.

Izana sits on a branch of the tree, juggling a small orb of light. Sorial and Zazimal cuddle against the trunk. Amalye stands at the edge, throwing rocks down the cliff. Izana suddenly jolts.

IZANA

I forgot to tell you. I got accepted into the Abbey.

AMALYE

That's fantastic, Izzy.

IZANA

High Priest Veloe says with my aptitude, I should be learning healing magic in no time.

Izana says Veloe with some disgust. She throws the light orb and it curves around back to her like a boomerang.

SORIAL

(scoffs)

You would enjoy menial work.

Sorial rubs Zazimal's chest.

SORIAL

So long as I have Zaz, I am set.

Zazimal kisses her on her forehead.

AMALYE

There has to be more out there though.

Izana's light orb vanishes.

IZANA

What? Out where?

Amalye points to all the little castles below them.

AMALYE

Down there.

SORIAL

With the barbarians?

ZAZIMAL

Why would you want to go down there? You're the daughter of the Grand Divine. You have everything you could want!

(pause)

I would give anything to be the Grand Divine, but Uryth has you primed to be next.

AMALYE

There has to be more than being the Grand Divine!

Izana jumps down from the branch.

IZANA

Amalye! Don't say that. It's a privilege to speak with Falicar.

ZAZIMAL

We are meant to be up here. Caelios is our home.

(MORE)

ZAZIMAL (CONT'D)

The Grand Divines have been saying
that for many generations.

SORIAL

You wouldn't survive down there.

AMALYE

I don't know. I read earlier that
we use to live down there too.

IZANA

Amalye, what has come over you?

AMALYE

There has to be more out there than
this. Reading and prayer cannot be
all to life.

Izana hugs Amalye and starts patting her back.

IZANA

I'm not sure what you have been
reading, but I think you need to
relax and free your mind.

Amalye hugs her back and nods her head. They then walk over
to the tree and sit down. They look up to the stars and
Amalye lets out a sigh.

URYTH

Amalye!

Amalye scrambles to her feet. Zazimal holds Sorial tighter.
Uryth flies in with Mureel and a few guards behind him.

URYTH

There you are. I specifically told
you not to come here.

AMALYE

I'm just trying to hang out with my
friends. Is that so bad?

URYTH

It is when you are suppose to be
studying! You disobeyed a direct
order. Come. We are going home.

Uryth turns and waves Amalye to him, but she stands still. He
marches over to her and grabs her by the wrist, dragging her
away.

URYTH

As for the rest of you, I would suggest returning home as well.

(pause)

Unless you want your priestess status revoke.

Izana gasps. Zazimal and Sorial quickly stand up. Uryth leaves, with Amalye in tow.

INT. AMALYE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Amalye lies face down on her plush bed. The room is lavish, with a vanity and a chifforobe with gold leaf. On the vanity, there are many hair accessories and jewelry. Muffled sounds of weeping can be heard from the pillow.

Uryth paces around the room.

URYTH

I gave you simple instructions. Why do you insist on disobeying me?

The muffled sobbing continues.

URYTH

Do you know how I look when everyone knows you are out acting this way?

Uryth sits on the foot of her bed.

URYTH

Dear, please, talk to me.

Amalye sits up and wipes a tear from her eye.

AMALYE

What is so wrong with me hanging out with my friends just one night? I spend all day cooped up in that library.

URYTH

I am doing what is best for you. If anything were to happen to you, I don't think I could live with my self.

He attempts to put his arm around her, but she pulls away.

URYTH

You left the city walls. I cannot protect you from what is out there.

(beat)

Besides, your studies are important, especially if you are to take over as Grand Divine.

AMALYE

Have you ever considered maybe I don't want to be the Grand Divine?

URYTH

Watch your tongue. It is an honor to be Grand Divine, and of course you want it. Your mother wanted it.

Amalye's face goes expressionless. She quickly turns away again and continues crying. Uryth stands up.

URYTH

Rest up. Tomorrow is a new day and all can be forgiven.

Uryth leaves. Amalye lies there for a moment. Then she gets up and changes into a lace nightgown. She removes a lot of her jewelry, placing it on the vanity. She sits cross legged at the end of her bed, arms raised to the ceiling. She mouths a prayer, and then clasps her hands together.

AMALYE

Praise Falicar.

She stands back up, and lies down. She folds her wings over her chest.

INT. AMALYE'S ROOM - LATER

Asleep now, Amalye tosses and turns. Sweat drips down her head. Blurred images flash as she spasms. Rough forms so distorted by blinding light. Faint snarls and screams can be heard.

FALICAR

(distorted)

Sanni.

Amalye jolts awake, drenched in sweat. She gets out of bed and walks to her balcony.

She sits cross legged on the balcony and sighs. She looks up to the moons and sits there in silence.

One of the stars in the distance shines brighter than all of the others. Her wings tense around her as she starts to shiver.

INT. DINING CHAMBER - DAY

Amalye walks sluggishly into the room. There is a long table with many chairs. There are plates of exotic foods.

On the walls surrounding the table are many portraits of elderly Alphere, distinguished by greyed feathers and wrinkles. Most of them all males, but one female portrait is drastically different. She is a lot younger. Almost the spitting image of Amalye.

Uryth sits at the head of the table, eating a pastry filled with yellow apples. Mureel digs into a glazed meat. SERVANTS stand by, waiting.

Amalye rubs her eyes as a servant pulls her chair out for her. She sits and plucks a grape.

SERVANT

What would you like, Lady Alsean?

AMALYE

(waving away)

Nothing right now.

The servant steps back.

URYTH

Are you not hungry?

AMALYE

I am not feeling well.

URYTH

You did sound restless last night.
Perhaps you should go see one of
Veloe's healers.

AMALYE

No. I'll be fine.

URYTH

What were you doing last night?

Amalye does not answer.

URYTH

I hope you can forgive me for
yesterday.

(MORE)

URYTH (CONT'D)

I really am doing what is best for you.

(beat)

Some day you will see that.

Amalye remains silent, and picks another grape.

AMALYE

Father, who was the first Grand Divine?

Uryth grins.

URYTH

A little early morning trivia? You will have to try harder than that though. Everyone knows the first Divine was Caeciul.

AMALYE

I actually heard that Pilia might have been the first Divine.

Uryth stops eating.

URYTH

Where did you hear that? You might want to reread some of the books.

AMALYE

Then is who Pilia?

URYTH

I am unfamiliar with that name. Where did you hear it?

Amalye pops another grape into her mouth.

AMALYE

I read it in a book.

URYTH

Interesting. Which book? I will have to check it.

AMALYE

I don't recall the name.

URYTH

Hmmm. I will ask Ouldue.

Uryth continues eating.

URYTH

Mureel, what are your plans for today?

MUREEL

I was going to visit the academy. Perhaps a surprise visit to see Oriss.

URYTH

Perfect. I will need you to escort Amalye to the library.

AMALYE

What?

MUREEL

Of course, father.

URYTH

Baron Greel is coming over this evening for dinner. Thusly, I expect you both to be back here on time.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Mureel and Amalye enter the library, and are quickly greeted by Ouldue.

OULDUE

Sir and Lady Alsean. How may I assist you today?

MUREEL

I am just making sure she gets here.

(to Amalye)

I will wait outside to make sure your hoodlum friends don't bother you.

Mureel exits.

OULDUE

Lady Alsean, if I may. That book you took yesterday, I would appreciate it if you returned it.

AMALYE

I don't have it anymore.

She flies up and starts looking through books.

OULDUE

You don't? Where is it?

He follows her into the bookshelves.

OULDUE

The Grand Divine wants that book.
He says it is dangerous.

AMALYE

Could you help me find books
instead of pestering me? There has
to be something else in here that
can confirm that book.

OULDUE

I assure you I possess nothing of
the sort.

Amalye pulls out a book titled *Falicar's Grace*. She flies
down to a table, placing the book before she flies up again.

OULDUE

You have read all these books
before. You know as well as I there
is nothing in them.

Amalye pulls out another book. This one titled *The Chosen
People*.

AMALYE

Does the word Sanni mean anything
to you?

OULDUE

Sanni? That is twaddle. This book
has you all perturbed.

Amalye flies to place the book on the table.

AMALYE

I know there's something here. I
will find it.

INT. LIGHT CATHEDRAL - DAY

Uryth kneels before the altar of the cathedral in meditation.
The cathedral is otherwise empty.

URYTH

My lord, grant her forgiveness for
her actions. She knows not what she
does.

Veloe walks into the cathedral.

VELOE
Uryth, did you feel that last night?

URYTH
Interrupting me in prayer? You are lucky this takes precedence.

Uryth stands up.

URYTH
I did. This one felt different.

VELOE
It was louder than usual. An important message?

URYTH
A message of destruction.

VELOE
Grim indeed. There was someone else, wasn't there? I could feel a presence.

Uryth extinguishes the incense burning.

URYTH
I felt it too. Unsure who it is.

VELOE
Then the time is coming.

URYTH
Indeed. My biggest fear is she is not prepared enough to be the one.

VELOE
We must be ready to accept whomever Falicar chooses.

Veloe begins to leave.

URYTH
Before you go, when did you know I was the chosen? Were there signs?

VELOE
All will be shown in time.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Amalye sits at the desk, surrounded by books, a hand on her forehead. A look of frustration on her face. She lets out an exasperated sigh.

Ouldue walks over to her just as she suddenly stands up and knocks over a couple of the books.

AMALYE

Nothing? How can there be nothing?

OULDUE

I would ask that you please do not take it out on the books.

Ouldue bends over to pick them up.

AMALYE

All the knowledge in the world, and nothing!

OULDUE

Because it is a lie.

(pause)

Please return the book to me.

Amalye walks up to Ouldue.

AMALYE

I will speak to father about this.

Ouldue nods slowly. Suddenly, he stops.

OULDUE

No! You mustn't.

Amalye continues walking.

AMALYE

Surely he will have more answers than you.

INT. DINING CHAMBER - NIGHT

Amalye, Uryth, and Mureel eat dinner. Many servants attend to them.

Baron GREEL sits across from Uryth. He is a heavyset Alphere, looking late 50s. He has short black hair with long black wings. Despite his weight, he still is as attractive as any Alphere.

THALEE sits to the right of Greel. She looks about Mureel's age with brown hair that comes to a red tip in the back. Her wings are brown with red highlights.

Sorial sits to Greel's left, next to Amalye.

The whole group is being attended to diligently by servants.

URYTH
So glad you could make it tonight,
Greel.

GREEL
(heartily)
I wouldn't dare refuse an invite of
the Divine for dinner.

Greel motions to Thalee.

GREEL
I don't believe you have met
Thalee.

THALEE
(overly enthusiastic)
Praise Falicar! It's so kind of you
to have us here.

Greel and Uryth continue talking indistinguishably in the background as Sorial leans over to Amalye.

SORIAL
(whispering)
Like dad's new preening?

AMALYE
(whispering)
She's practically your sister.

The two giggle.

SORIAL
I give her a year, tops.

AMALYE
Have a little faith. Think of all
her clothes you can fit!

Mureel glares over at the girls snickering.

AMALYE
I was thinking of getting my
plumage done.

Amalye fluffs the feathers on her head. Sorial runs her fingers through the feathers.

SORIAL

But it's so naturally beautiful.
Now Izana needs to do something. We
need to get her to a salon.

AMALYE

Izzy? No. She looks so nice.

A servant approaches the girls.

SERVANT

May I refill your drinks, young
mistresses.

The two stare at him in silence. Sorial makes a gesture for him to leave.

He stands there awkwardly.

SORIAL

We are having a conversation here.
Get.

The servant bows and departs, skittishly. Sorial turns back to Amalye.

SORIAL

So Zass and I are going to the
spring. You want in?

Amalye shushes her.

SORIAL

We can invite Izana too.

AMALYE

I'm in enough trouble as it is.

SORIAL

By Falicar, I love you, Ams, but
you are impossible.

GREEL

Watch your tongue, girl.

Greel slaps Sorial's arm.

URYTH

What are you two girls talking
about?

Sorial puts on her best good girl impression.

SORIAL
Just girl things.

Sorial and Amalye giggle.

Servants come out with the main course. Lamb.

GREEL
Fabulous! You sure know how to
treat a man.

Greel digs in ravenously.

URYTH
I thought you might enjoy this.

Uryth cuts his meat delicately.

URYTH
There is one matter of business I
would like to discuss. I wish to
requisition some of your aurium.

GREEL
(mouth full of food)
Certainly. What for, if you don't
mind my asking?

URYTH
I would like a statue of Falicar
made for the nest.

GREEL
How better to be closer to His
Brilliance.

Greel stuffs another oversized portion into his gullet.

GREEL
I'll have it sent over.
(beat)
That speech you gave the other day,
much more inspirational than Veloe
ever was.

URYTH
Thank you. I owe it all to Falicar
after all.

GREEL

I bet with you in charge, we could
conquer all those barbarians and
make a world where the Light
reigns.

URYTH

(chuckles)

Nonsense. Falicar teaches peace. We
want for nothing up here. We don't
need the dark lands.

Amalye's attention is suddenly grabbed.

AMALYE

I read that we might have descended
from the barbarians.

A look of shock overcomes everyone else at the table. Greel
bursts into laughter.

SORIAL

(under her breath)

Not again.

URYTH

(forcibly chuckling)

I didn't know Ouldue stocked
comedies.

AMALYE

This journal says it all!

Amalye reaches into her vestments and pulls out the journal.

URYTH

I will have to speak with Ouldue.

Amalye flips through the pages and points at a sketch of
Falicar.

AMALYE

Right here.

(reading the book)

A large birdman, with six wings and
three eyes, suddenly appeared
before us.

URYTH

Simply because Falicar has visited
the barbarians, does not mean we
are one and the same.

MUREEL

Falicar would not even visit the
barbarians. We are His chosen.

AMALYE

These were His chosen too!

Greel chuckles.

GREEL

(licking his lips)
You've got quite the feisty one on
your hands here.

Uryth jumps to his feet.

URYTH

There is no place in this nest for
heretics.

AMALYE

But what if there is some truth to
it?

URYTH

Do you hear yourself?

Sorial tugs at Amalye's arm.

SORIAL

Ams, please.

URYTH

I will not hear anymore of this
blaspheming.

Uryth snatches the journal.

URYTH

Where did you find this? The peaks?

AMALYE

No!

GREEL

Such a rebellious child. Not like
my Sorial.

Sorial shrinks in her chair.

URYTH

You can feel free to excuse
yourself whenever you would like,
Baron.

(MORE)

URYTH (CONT'D)

(beat)

And you may like to know that your daughter was at the peaks too.

Greel nearly falls out of his chair getting to his feet.

GREEL

It's that no good harpy Zazimal. We are leaving.

(muttering)

Tainting my darling angel.

Thalee and Sorial follow Greel out.

URYTH

As for you, to your room. We will continue this discussion in private.

Amalye stands up forcefully, knocking over glasses as her fists pound the table.

INT. AMALYE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Amalye sits on her bed, arms folded. She avoids looking at her father.

Uryth stands before the fireplace.

URYTH

Why do you insist on making me look like the fool? All over some inane book?

AMALYE

You don't understand.

URYTH

One blasphemous book is not going to change years of tradition and teachings.

AMALYE

I just want answers.

URYTH

Well you will not find them in here.

Uryth throws the journal into the fire.

URYTH

Through Falicar, your answers will come. I hope this rids you of your plight.

AMALYE

I don't care about Falicar, and I don't care about this stupid religion.

Uryth slaps her across the face.

URYTH

You would spit in the face of centuries of our people's way? Turn your back on the very reason for your existence? You would disrespect your mother?

Amalye tears up.

URYTH

We will discuss your repentance in the morning. For now, I can hardly look at you.

Uryth storms out of the room.

INT. AMALYE'S ROOM - LATER

Amalye wakes in a panicked sweat.

She frantically throws a thick fur coat over her nightgown. She grabs jewelry, hair combs, and some clothes and fashions a knapsack.

She leaves out the balcony.

EXT. ALSEAN MANOR - CONTINUOUS

Amalye stealthily flies past Uryth balcony.

URYTH (O.S.)

I do not know what to do with her. I have tried so hard to make her just like you. Her incessant disregard for our customs...

He trails off as Amalye gets farther and farther away.

EXT. IZANA'S BALCONY - NIGHT

Amalye lands on the balcony and knocks on the wall.

Izana's bedroom is quite bare. A chifforobe, a nightstand, and a small altar with various vials. The bed practically engulfs Izana.

Izana stirs and stands up. She wears a sheer nightgown.

IZANA
(groggily)
What are you doing here? Is something wrong?

AMALYE
Pack your things.

IZANA
What did Sorial do? You can stay here for a few nights. My parents won't mind.

AMALYE
No, Izzy. I'm running away.

Izana rubs her eyes.

IZANA
It's late. Come in. Get some rest.

AMALYE
Are you coming with me or not?

IZANA
There's no where to go. Whatever this is about, we can deal with it tomorrow.

AMALYE
I can't. I just can't.

Izana sits on the balcony and pats the ground next to her.

Amalye refuses to sit.

IZANA
I can't leave. There's nothing out there for either of us. This is where we are meant to be.

Amalye shakes her head.

AMALYE

I am leaving. I had just hoped you
would support me.

Amalye flies away. Izana sits there a moment, yawns, and goes
back inside.

INT. DINING CHAMBER - DAY

Uryth and Mureel eat breakfast. Everything is normal, except
Amalye missing.

URYTH

It is unlike your sister to sleep
in so late.

Mureel finishes eating the food on his plate.

MUREEL

She is probably just up there
moping.

Uryth shoots Mureel a death glare.

URYTH

Would you kindly go check on her to
make sure everything is all right?

Mureel pushes his chair out with a little more force than
necessary. He leaves.

Uryth remains, eating. Servants come up with more food and
drinks.

Not but moments later, Mureel returns, panting.

MUREEL

You need to come quick. Something
has happened.

Uryth stands up abruptly.

INT. AMALYE'S ROOM - DAY

Uryth and Mureel stand in Amalye's room. Clothes are strewn
across the floor and bed. The sheets are tossed to the side.
The vanity drawers hang open, void of their contents.

Uryth bends over and picks up a long silken fabric.

URYTH

Who would have done such a thing?

MUREEL

I heard nothing last night.

Uryth stands up and gets in Mureel's face.

URYTH

Get your guard patrol on this
immediately. Search the peaks.
Search her friends. We will find
whoever did this.

EXT. LOREPS - DAY

Amalye arrives at a small village just at the foot of the mountains. It is a small settlement, with a lot of farms and a large market.

There are many peoples wandering the streets of Loreps. Some are stocky and well built, while others are slender with pointed ears. Some are amphibious and some are short and very thing.

These people mingle freely and very clearly not barbarians.

Amalye is hesitant. She stands just outside of the settlement, clutching her arms.

A GUARD approaches Amalye. He wears metal armor, with a lion insignia on the front.

GUARD

Excuse me.

She quickly runs away from him.

AMALYE

Don't eat me!

Amalye runs behind one of the wooden houses. She peers around the corner. The guard does not chase.

Amalye looks around the other side and watches as an Acoro trades with an Oro merchant. The Acoro hands the merchant a handful of coins. The Oro hands the Acoro a fish, wrapped in leaf.

Amalye sidles along the house, inching closer to the marketplace. She looks around again. A Minoro flashes a dagger at a stall. Amalye lets out a squeak, and falls to her butt.

CELLIA (O.S.)

Can I help you, ma'am.

Amalye looks up, and sees CELLIA, a female Acoro in her early 30s. Her skin shimmers turquoise and she is adorned with studs and an iridescent dress. She offers Amalye a hand.

Amalye sits there, arms folded on her knees.

CELLIA (CONT'D)
I've heard stories of your kind. Do
you have names?

Amalye scrambles to her feet and runs.

AMALYE
Leave me be!

She trips. Face first into the ground.

CELLIA
Oh, you poor thing. Let's get you
up.

Cellia bends over and helps Amalye up. Amalye is filthy.

CELLIA (CONT'D)
Luckily for you, my sister is a
seamstress.

Cellia twirls and her dress sparkles every imaginable color.
Amalye begins to smile.

CELLIA (CONT'D)
You do have coin, right?

AMALYE
Coin?

CELLIA
Coin. Money. Gold.

AMALYE
I have aurium. Lots.

Amalye takes some of her jewelry out of her knapsack

Cellia's eyes light up.

CELLIA
Those are so beautiful. I'm sure we
can arrange something.

EXT. LOREPS - LATER

Amalye stands at a stall, wearing a new colorful dress. Unlike her vestments that covered all her skin, the dress is more revealing. It is cut lower in the back to accommodate her wings. She tries to cover up her arms.

ELLID stands behind the stall, next to Cellia. Ellid is slightly younger, but just as colorful.

CELLIA
Let's see a spin.

Amalye reluctantly spins around. The dress flares up as she spins, and she quickly pushes it down.

ELLID
Lovely! Twenty-five gold pieces,
please.

Amalye pulls out a large sack of gold and hands Ellid twenty-five pieces.

Cellia snatches up the gold pieces swiftly, rubbing them in her hands.

Amalye leaves the sisters and checks out other stalls. The other stalls sell various trinkets, weapons, clothing, and supplies.

One stall catches her attention. It is a food stall, but the food looks like the equivalent of carnival food. Especially compared to what she is used to. The VENDOR is a plump, greasy Oro.

Amalye clutches her stomach.

VENDOR
Hey, missy. You look like you could
eat. Come on over here.

Amalye approaches slowly.

VENDOR
What can I do ya for?

Amalye looks at the food, surveying it.

AMALYE
(hesitantly)
Do you have any apple fills?

The vendor looks at the table, then back at Amalye.

VENDOR
I gots spiced bread, pickled beets,
grilled goat bites.

AMALYE
Goat bites?

The vendor procures a sack of chopped up pieces of meat.

AMALYE
What is the glazing?

VENDOR
Glazin'? Fat. One gold lady. Buy it
or move.

Amalye pulls out a gold piece and takes the sack. She takes a bite of the meat and winces. She chews slowly, and forces a swallow.

INT. CATHEDRAL CHAMBER - DAY

Uryth paces around the room, massaging his temples.

URYTH
Yeeala, where could she be?

Mureel suddenly bursts in the room, dragging Izana by the arm. They stop in front of Uryth.

Izana rips her arm from Mureel's grasp.

IZANA
Get your hands off me, you oaf.

MUREEL
Ms. Reyles here spoke with Amalye
last night.

Uryth rushes up to her, getting way too close.

URYTH
What did you say to her?

IZANA
I didn't say anything to her.

URYTH
What did you do with her?

Izana steps back away from Uryth.

IZANA

She talked about running away.
Leaving the city.

URYTH

She'd never. You must have told her
to run away. Where did she go?

IZANA

I don't know. I just hope she's
safe.

URYTH

We will find her.

Uryth spins around to Mureel.

URYTH

Get your guards on this! Find her.

MUREEL

They already are, father.

EXT. LOREPS - NIGHT

The sun has fallen and the streets of Loreps are now mostly
empty.

Amalye wanders the road. She has a new bag, a sun hat, slips,
and her money bag is noticeably smaller now.

A wolf howls in the distance.

Amalye jumps and hovers in the air for a moment. She looks
around, everyone else has gone inside. She spots a building
with a sign depicting a bed and a mug on it.

INT. INN - NIGHT

Amalye enters a rowdy inn. There is a counter in front of a
few large wooden kegs. There are several tables, with
DRUNKARDS, both male and female, of all races, crowding them.
A few doors probably lead to rooms.

An INNKEEPER stands behind the counter. A male Oro, in his
40s. He stands there, cleaning a cup.

Amalye walks through, surveying the crowd. She locks eyes
with one of the drunkards.

DRUNKARD #1
Hey, pretty girl! Why'n't cha come
o'er 'ere?

Amalye takes a step back.

DRUNKARD #2
My, my. Ain't chu a beaut?

The drunkard reaches out to grab Amalye's wrist.
She pulls away.

AMALYE
Keep your hands off of me, peasant!

DRUNKARD #2
That's no way fer a lady ta talk?

The first drunkard stands up.

DRUNKARD #1
Erhaps we need teach you a less'n.

He pulls a dagger out of his tunic.

Amalye lets out a screech.

INNKEEPER
Ey! I'll not be having any fights
in my inn.

DRUNKARD #2
Wes just tryna teach her a less'n.

The innkeeper walks around the counter and up to the men.

INNKEEPER
I said no fighting in my inn. Yous
gotta problem with that, yous can
take it up with me.

The two drunkards sit back down, muttering to themselves.

The innkeeper walks back to his counter. Amalye follows him.

AMALYE
I-I did not need your assistance.

INNKEEPER
I didn't do it for you.

Amalye looks astonished.

AMALYE

I am looking for a place to stay.

INNKEEPER

Aye.

The the two stand there in silence.

INNKEEPER

If you ain't gonna buy a room, move on. I got customers to attend to.

Amalye looks behind her. The customers are busy drinking and being rambunctious.

AMALYE

I want one!

INNKEEPER

Five gold.

Amalye signs, and pulls out five gold pieces. The innkeeper grabs them.

INNKEEPER

Follow me.

The innkeeper leads her to one of the doors. He takes out a key and unlocks the door.

The door swings open revealing an unkempt room. A rough looking bed with a chewed up blanket. A side table with deep knife cuts in it.

AMALYE

Do you have another room?

The innkeeper looks her up and down, then walks away laughing.

Amalye hesitantly enters the room.

INT. INN BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Amalye shuts the door, but the sound of the patrons can still be heard. She lifts up the torn blanket with a pinch. She throws her bag onto the bed. She removes her hat and her slips. She places the hat delicately on the stand. The slips she arranges at the foot of the bed.

She sits cross legged next to the bed, arms raised to the ceiling. She mouths words.

AMALYE
(softly)
Praise Falicar.

She stands up, and opens her bag. There is not a single garment or nightgown. Amalye looks worried, but she begins to slip off the dress.

INT. INN BEDROOM - LATER

Amalye tosses and turns under the sheets.

Images begin to flash. A temple, Ancient Greece style. The sun eclipsing the moon. A three horned demon. Falicar, wielding his golden mace. The images are slightly blurred by light.

FALICAR
My child... travel to Sanni... find
my mace...

Most of what is said is indistinguishable still.

Amalye wakes up in a panicked sweat, keeping the blanket tight to her.

EXT. LOREPS - DAY

Amalye walks around the town. It is bustling again.

She approaches a CLOTHIER, an Ere, mid 40s.

AMALYE
I would like an outfit and a
nightgown.

The clothier looks at her dress.

CLOTHIER
You seem to have a seamstress.

Amalye looks around at the other stalls.

AMALYE
I do not see them. Can you make me
clothes or not?

CLOTHIER
Nothing like that.

AMALYE
That is fine. I require clothes.

The clothier pulls out a blouse from behind the stall.

CLOTHIER

This ought to fit. Try it on.

Amalye pulls the blouse over her head. It tears as her wings burst through the fabric. The clothier's jaw drops.

CLOTHIER (CONT'D)

Huh. I doubt a fin back would work.

AMALYE

Are all barbarians this incompetent?

CLOTHIER

(flustered)

Uh, I-I can fix this. Just, just give me a moment.

Amalye leans on the stall counter and taps her fingers.

The clothier begins cutting up the back of a blouse.

EXT. LOREPS - LATER

Amalye, now wearing a cute blouse and skirt, stands at another stall, surveying food. Her bag is now bulging, but her gold sack is near empty.

MUREEL (O.S.)

I am looking for a female of our kind. We have reason to believe she came this way.

Amalye turns to see Mureel, along with two ALPHERE GUARDS talking to the Loreps guard.

GUARD

There was one here. Been causing quite the talk around town.

Amalye quickly runs, darting between houses.

MUREEL

Show us to her. Now.

GUARD

Well I ain't quite sure where she is. It's a small enough town. Shouldn't be hard to find her.

Amalye stops by a wagon. She watches as Mureel approaches the stalls.

MUREEL
You there, fish. Have you seen a
female of my kind?

CELLIA
It'll cost you.

MUREEL
You will tell me, or you will face
the wrath of the Alphere.

Cellia folds her arms, which is kinda difficult with the small fins on her forearms.

CELLIA
I'd like to see you try.

ELLID
Don't make me call the guards.

Amalye lifts up the cover of the wagon delicately. Underneath there are baskets of fruit and bread. She places it back slowly.

MUREEL
You stand in the way of Alphere
business.

One of the Alphere guards approaches Mureel and whispers in his ear.

Amalye looks around, then back to the cart. She abruptly pulls the cover up, and climbs in.

INT. WAGON - DAY

Amalye is asleep in the back of the wagon.

WAGON OWNER (O.S.)
She's there, in the back.

Amalye stirs.

The covers of the wagon are ripped off.

EXT. GALLAROTH GATE - CONTINUOUS

The wagon is parked outside of a large stone wall. A portcullis blocks the openly opening in the wall.

The WAGON OWNER, a middle aged Oro, stares and points at Amalye. Two CITY GUARDS stand on either side. They have the same lion emblem on their armor.

WAGON OWNER
Arrest her!

The guards look at each other in disbelief.

CITY GUARD #1
Ma'am, please get out of the cart.

Amalye is still dazed. She tries to hide herself in the bags.

CITY GUARD #2
Out of the cart, or we'll make you.

Amalye stands up slowly.

AMALYE
I am Princess Amalye. I demand to
speak to your king!

The guards look at each other and laugh.

CITY GUARD #1
Miss, get out of the cart.

WAGON OWNER
I demand something be done about
this!

Amalye throws her gold pouch at the wagon owner. She gets off the wagon.

The wagon owner leaves, massaging the pouch.

AMALYE
I wish to seek sanctuary with your
king.

CITY GUARD #2
It ain't happening.

CITY GUARD #1
You're welcome in the city.

CITY GUARD #2
But Emperor Quillion doesn't hold
council with everyone claiming to
be a noble.

CITY GUARD #1
If it's protection you seek, you
could always check with the
fighters at Samarin Hall.

Amalye huffs, and marches into the city.

EXT. GALLAROTH BAZAAR - STREETS - DAY

The stone paved streets of Gallaroth are bustling. Wagons move slowly down the center, careful not run over the numerous walkers surrounding them.

Typical medieval houses line the streets, as clustered and cramped as their residents. Stone foundations with wooden upper levels.

Amalye tries to force her way through the crowd, but she is forced to follow the flow.

AMALYE
Excuse me-

A short, stocky man pushes past her.

AMALYE (CONT'D)
I just-

A lanky female shoves her aside.

AMALYE (CONT'D)
I'm trying to-

Another MAN bumps into her back.

MAN
Watch where you're walking!

AMALYE
But you-

The man keeps walking.

Amalye forces her way into an alley. She leans against the stone wall. She slides down and sits on the ground, wings wrapped around her. Her breathing is frantic and erratic.

She stands up and flies into above the street. Her breathing returns to normal.

She looks around the bazaar. There are stalls set up for nearly everything.

Several stalls dedicated to food, a few selling clothes, a few to artisanal works. One stall stands out. A blacksmith.

Amalye flies towards it.

EXT. GALLAROTH BAZAAR - CALDWELL'S STALL - CONTINUOUS

Amalye lands in front of the stall. There is a small wooden counter with various swords and daggers. A large forge with an anvil next to it.

Behind the counter stands CALDWELL, a middle aged Oro, muscular, wearing a heavy apron, a few strands of gray hair hidden amongst the black. He hammers away on a red hot sword.

AMALYE

You there, peasant worker.

Caldwell stops mid-swing.

CALDWELL

Now, I dunno who you think-

Caldwell turns and sees Amalye.

CALDWELL (CONT'D)

Don't get too many of you 'round these parts.

(beat)

What can I do ya for?

AMALYE

I am in search of Falicar's golden mace.

CALDWELL

Never heard of it.

Amalye is taken aback.

AMALYE

Even the youngest of hatchlings are taught of the mace. Falicar used it to defeat the demons.

CALDWELL

Not in our land.

Caldwell returns back to work.

Amalye walks around the counter so she is in his line of sight.

AMALYE

You are a warrior, surely the mace
of a god would be of interest.

CALDWELL

The gods are of no interest to me.

Amalye gasps.

AMALYE

Blasphemous. You are a barbarian.

Caldwell puts the sword in the water and his hammer in his
apron.

CALDWELL

Your gods don't care about us. What
has Falicar ever done for me?

AMALYE

Falicar has provided you with life
and the light of the sun above.

CALDWELL

Is that what they teach you up on
that mountain?

AMALYE

Why are you barbarians so rude?

CALDWELL

Rude? Do you even know what we've
been through?

AMALYE

I know the barbarians fight each
other.

Caldwell pounds on the counter.

CALDWELL

Stop with the barbarian.

(beat)

To call that a fight is an insult
to my comrades. We sent envoys to
your people. Had you assisted us,
we would not have lost as many good
men.

AMALYE

We never received any envoys.
Besides, the Light teaches peace is
the way.

CALDWELL

Peace isn't an option when the Maloro horde is slaughtering your people.

Amalye covers her mouth.

CALDWELL (CONT'D)

You prissy birds care nothing about anything outside the Golden City.

Amalye huffs.

AMALYE

Perhaps if you brutes weren't always at war!

CALDWELL

Look, if you ain't here to buy something, I suggest you leave.

AMALYE

I have reason to believe the mace is Sanni.

CALDWELL

Well, you are quite a ways from Sanni. Catch the first caravan heading north.

Caldwell pulls the sword back out of the water.

AMALYE

I am in need of protection.

CALDWELL

Now that I can supply. I've got maces, swords, daggers. Whatever you're comfortable with. Perhaps some armor-

AMALYE

(interjecting)

What? No! I am forbidden from touching such vulgar items.

CALDWELL

I like to think my arms are well crafted.

AMALYE

I did not mean to insult your work.
Falicar teaches that raising arms
in anger is the way of the dark
ones.

CALDWELL

If it's sellswords you're after,
check Samarin Hall.

Caldwell points down the bazaar street.

CALDWELL (CONT'D)

That a'way. Big place, can't miss
it. They'll be happy to help.

Amalye looks at the crowd, nervously.

AMALYE

Surely, as the master of this
forge, you know how to use these.

CALDWELL

I haven't wielded a sword since the
war. Sides, you wouldn't want an
old codger like me as your guard.

Caldwell shoves the sword back into the forge.

CALDWELL (CONT'D)

I have a business to run here,
miss. I can't leave, without losing
my forge.

Caldwell pulls the sword out and begins hammering.

Amalye perks up. She reaches into her shirt and pulls out a
bejeweled necklace.

AMALYE

What about this?

Caldwell puts his hammer down and takes the necklace.

CALDWELL

This is worth a well over a year's
earning.

AMALYE

It'll work?

CALDWELL

I need to get my armor. We can
depart for Sanni in a couple days.
Follow me.

Caldwell walks out from behind the stall. He pushes his way through the crowd.

Amalye hesitates, and then rushes to catch up with him.

EXT. GALLAROTH BAZAAR - CONTINUOUS

HARX, 37, dressed in a brown robe that covers all identifiable features, watches Amalye and Caldwell leave the stall.

He snickers, which quickly turns into a violent cough.

He notices two CITY GUARDS walking in his direction.

He quickly shirks into the alley.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Harx climbs down the stairs into a dingy basement. To call it dirty would be an understatement. Filth everywhere, decrepit furniture. Only a handful of melted candles light the room.

A bust of Carsino stands on a shrine. It is the only thing in this cramped room that looks nice.

Harx pulls the cloak from his head. His skin is a putrid greenish white and his nose is missing. He has three stringy hairs atop his head.

Harx stops before the bust of Carsino and bows in reverence.

HARX

Oh, mighty plagued one, hear my
call!

Suddenly, Carsino appears as a bestial phantasm, from the torso up.

CARSINO

Stop your sniveling, pathetic runt.

Harx stops bowing, but keeps himself humbled.

CARSINO (CONT'D)

Why have you summoned me?

HARX

This one has found something that
will please my lord.

CARSINO

The light bringer? You know where
she is?

HARX

Light bringer?

Carsino swings at Harx, but the arm passes through him.

CARSINO

Quiet, fool! You know where the
bird is?

HARX

Yes. She is traveling with an Oro.

CARSINO

Perfect. Far too long has that
angel bested me. Now is my chance!
I need you to track her down. Bring
her to Pandario.

HARX

Yes, my lord.

CARSINO

Do this, and I will reward you,
greatly.

The phantasm of Carsino vanishes in a noxious puff.

EXT. CALDWELL'S HOUSE - DAY

Caldwell and Amalye are outside of a typical medieval house.
The streets around here are far less crowded than the bazaar.
A wagon is in the streets, filled with crates.

Caldwell now wears a suit of armor. It resembles the suit the
guards wear, but it is worn and dented. The blue lion
insignia is almost completely faded. A sword is sheathed at
his side.

Caldwell carries another crate to the wagon. Amalye stands
and watches.

CALDWELL

That should be all. We will need to
make a stop in Andor for more
supplies.

Caldwell places the crate down. He waves Amalye onto the wagon.

AMALYE

You want me to climb in there?

CALDWELL

Did you have another way for us to get to Sanni?

AMALYE

Well, no. But your wagons are just so dirty.

Caldwell brushes off a box.

CALDWELL

How's that?

Amalye crosses her arms.

CALDWELL

Sorry it's not up to your standards. I'll be sure to get a new one in Andor. Now get in.

Harx approaches the two, still fully robed.

HARX

Excuse me, pretty bird.

Caldwell and Amalye turn to Harx.

AMALYE

Who are you?

HARX

This one follows Falicar. We know a place that needs your wisdom.

AMALYE

Good to see everyone isn't a barbarian.

Amalye leers at Caldwell.

AMALYE

I would gladly help out anyone in need of the Light.

(sadly)

But I have to go to Sanni first.

Harx gets closer. Caldwell tenses up a bit.

HARX

They are in need of your help. You must come with me!

AMALYE

It will have to wait.

HARX

It can't!

Harx reaches out to grab Amalye, but Caldwell steps in the way.

CALDWELL

I would suggest you take a step back.

Caldwell rests his hand on the hilt.

HARX

You don't scare me, smoothskin.

CALDWELL

What did you just say?

Caldwell unsheathes his sword a bit.

AMALYE

Caldwell! That is no way to treat a priest of Falicar!

HARX

Yes, yes. Listen to my lady. She speaks wise.

AMALYE

He is but a simple priest trying to teach you heathens the ways of the Light.

Harx nods vigorously.

AMALYE

Why does you city wreak so much?

CALDWELL

My apologies, ma'am. I should not have stepped out of line.

As Caldwell says this, he steps forward, ramming his shoulder into Harx.

Harx topples backwards from the impact, and his hood falls back.

Amalye gasps as Caldwell quickly pulls out his sword. He points it at Harx.

CALDWELL
Your kind aren't allowed in this
city.

Harx scrambles away from Caldwell.

HARX
Carsino sends his regards. You will
die, smoothskin.

Harx spits at Caldwell, but it comes nowhere close.

Caldwell steps forward.

CALDWELL
I've dealt with many of your kind.

Harx gets to his feet. He suddenly pulls a dagger from his cloak and lunges at Caldwell.

Flawlessly, Caldwell parries the attack and knocks Harx over again.

Harx flees before Caldwell can attack again.

HARX
You will pay. Carsino will win!

Caldwell sheathes his sword and turns to Amalye.

AMALYE
You saved me.

CALDWELL
That's what you're paying me for.

Amalye stands there, staring at Caldwell.

CALDWELL
Now come, get in. Now that the
Maloro are after you, we have to
hurry.

Amalye flies onto the back of the wagon.

EXT. GALLAROTH GATE - DAY

Caldwell sits at the front of the wagon, steering the horse. He has stopped next to a CITY GUARD.

Amalye sits in the back, arms crossed on a crate, resting her head on her arms.

CALDWELL

I didn't want to start a panic.

CITY GUARD #1

We'll be on the lookout. Thank you for your information.

Caldwell snaps the reins and the horse moves.

AMALYE

How dare that creature use Falicar's name in vain?

Caldwell grunts.

AMALYE

What an awful thing to do. Such a despicable being. Why would he do that?

CALDWELL

People aren't always who they say. The Maloro especially. Many suffered at their hands.

AMALYE

How can someone be so evil?

CALDWELL

You really were sheltered up there.

EXT. GAZIKS PLAINS - DAY

Amalye is sprawled over a crate while Caldwell is still at the helm.

AMALYE

How much longer is this trip going to be?

CALDWELL

We left not half a day ago.

AMALYE

But this is so tedious.

CALDWELL

I'm sure you can find something to occupy yourself.

AMALYE
But how much longer do we have?

CALDWELL
A few days probably.

AMALYE
A few days?!

Amalye flops over on the crates, sighing.

EXT. GAZIKS PLAINS - LATER

Amalye is sitting hunched over in the back, watching the roaming countryside.

Caldwell sits at the front, stoically.

AMALYE
Why is the horse so slow? Can we
make it go faster?

Caldwell snaps at the reins. The speed does not change.

AMALYE
Wouldn't it just be faster if we
flew?

CALDWELL
You see wings?

Amalye flairs hers.

CALDWELL
You gonna carry us?

AMALYE
What?! No! I can't do that.

The two continue along in silence for a moment.

AMALYE
It would still be nice if your
horse was faster.

EXT. GAZIKS PLAINS - NIGHT

Amalye lies on the crates uncomfortably. Her wings spread out. She stares at the stars above.

She yawns.

CALDWELL
I guess it's time for camp.

Amalye sits up.

AMALYE
Camp?

Caldwell lets out a heavy sigh.

Caldwell pulls the horse off the road and hops down. He grabs a crate and begins setting up a camp.

AMALYE
What are you doing?

Caldwell pitches a tent.

AMALYE
We aren't... we aren't sleeping out here?!

Caldwell gathers twigs.

AMALYE
There has to be somewhere nearby.

CALDWELL
Andor is another half a day.

Caldwell puts the sticks in a pile and starts collects rocks.

AMALYE
I am not sleeping out here. It's dirty. There's all sorts of animals out here. And there's no protection.

Caldwell has a fire started.

AMALYE
And bandits! What if we get attacked by bandits in the middle of the night!? You'll be doing an awful job of keeping me safe if we get attacked by bandits in the night.

CALDWELL
Shh. Keep your voice down. I think I heard something.

Amalye shrieks.

AMALYE

Where?!

Caldwell chuckles. He pats the ground next to him. The fire is roaring.

She hesitates. She then brushes the ground and tries her best to sit elegantly.

Caldwell pulls out a loaf of bread and breaks it. He hands half to Amalye. She takes it.

AMALYE

This is all we have?

CALDWELL

What were you hoping for?

Amalye looks at the bread.

AMALYE

I don't know. Goat? I would like goat.

CALDWELL

(chewing)

Not practical.

Amalye looks at the bread again. She takes a bite.

EXT. GAZIKS PLAINS - LATER

The fire is out and Caldwell is poking at the ashes. Amalye stares at the stars.

CALDWELL

The tent is for you.

Caldwell lays out a bedroll.

Amalye enters the tent.

Through the fabric of the tent, Caldwell watches as Amalye kneels down with her arms raised to the sky. He slides into his bedroll.

EXT. GAZIKS PLAINS - DAY

Amalye sits silently in the back of the wagon. Her normally golden skin is incredibly pale and her eyes are baggy.

Caldwell sits at the front, as usual.

CALDWELL
Usually you're so talkative. You
haven't said a peep.

Caldwell looks back.

Amalye is fatigued, barely able to hold her head up.

CALDWELL
You feeling a'ight?

Amalye coughs.

AMALYE
(groggily)
I'm just a little sleepy.

Caldwell snaps the reins and horse speeds up.

CALDWELL
We gotta get you to Andor.

EXT. ANDOR - DAY

The grey stone walls of Andor are shorter than those in Gallaroth, but still as imposing. It is far less claustrophobic, but still lively.

Caldwell hitches the horse to a post and moves around to the back of the wagon.

Amalye is dozing off, barely able to keep herself up.

Caldwell offers her a hand, which she takes slowly. Caldwell pulls her onto his back. She wraps her arms around him as tight as she can.

Caldwell walks with her piggyback.

INT. HERB SHOP - DAY

A dark shop with various plants everywhere. Behind a counter stands a frail man, SHOPKEEPER, 60s, hunched over the counter. Behind him is a shelf with bottles filled with different colored liquids.

Caldwell studies the plants. Amalye asleep on his back.

Caldwell walks up to the shopkeeper.

CALDWELL

(hushed)

Do you have carn root? Or hapis
leaf?

The shopkeeper cackles and pulls a potion off the shelf.

SHOPKEEPER

What you need is this special
aganti blood elixir. It's
guaranteed to cure all ailments and
extend your life by decades.

Caldwell adjusts Amalye on his back.

CALDWELL

No. I'm good. Thank you. What I
really need it-

SHOPKEEPER

But she is sick, no? I promise you,
this will cure her.

CALDWELL

Sir, I really just need the
ingredients.

SHOPKEEPER

She's a pretty girl. Normally I
charge a hundred gold, but I'll
give you a deal. Half off.

Caldwell huffs and begins to trudge out.

CALDWELL

I am not interested.

The shopkeeper puts the potion away.

SHOPKEEPER

I have what you're after. Carn root
and hapis leaf.

EXT. ANDOR - DAY

Amalye wakes up in the back of the wagon. She is still
groggy.

AMALYE

I need to see a healer. Where is
Izana?

Amalye looks around and see Caldwell sitting next to the wagon. He uses a mortar and pestle.

Caldwell stands up and hands her the mortar. There is a viscous mixture inside.

CALDWELL

Drink.

Amalye takes a sip. She immediately spits it out and coughs.

AMALYE

This is rancid.

CALDWELL

Drink it. You'll feel better.

Amalye sets the mortar down.

AMALYE

I can't. It's gross.

Caldwell picks the mortar up.

CALDWELL

You're sick. We don't have healers down here.

AMALYE

I'll be fine. Let's get to Sanni.

Amalye attempts to stand up, but nearly passes out.

AMALYE

(muttering)

Okay.

CALDWELL

What was that?

AMALYE

I'll take the medicine.

Caldwell hands Amalye the mortar.

CALDWELL

I'm just trying to protect you.

Amalye takes another sip and gags.

CALDWELL

It's easier if you gulp it down.

Amalye chugs the mixture. She gags again and spits up some of the mixture, forcing it back down.

CALDWELL

Good. You should feel better in no time. Works like a charm.

Caldwell goes to the front of the wagon and unhitches the horse. He hops onto the driver's seat.

EXT. SALVI HILLS - DAY

The road after Andor is a dirt road through roving hills. The wagon bumps constantly.

Amalye does her best to keep herself stable as the cart rocks. The color has returned to her skin.

AMALYE

Can you keep the wagon steady?

Caldwell hits another bump.

AMALYE

Please?

It is steady for a bit, but the next bump nearly sends Amalye over the edge of the wagon.

AMALYE

Hey! You're doing this on purpose.

Amalye's butt rumbles in the wagon as they hit a gravel spot.

AMALYE

Do you always drive like this?

CALDWELL

You wanna take the reins?

AMALYE

What? No! That's your job. Just do it better.

Caldwell smirks as he hits another bump. Amalye shrieks as she is tossed in the air.

EXT. SALVI HILLS - DAY

Amalye sits in the back, bracing herself with both arms. The sky darkens as it begins to rain.

Amalye holds a hand out and catches a few drops.

AMALYE
The sky is wet.

CALDWELL
Pardon?

Amalye climbs to the front of the wagon and holds her hand in front of Caldwell.

AMALYE
The sky is wet. See?

The rain picks up.

CALDWELL
You've never seen rain before?

AMALYE
Rain? No.

Amalye uses her wings to keep her dry.

AMALYE
We get a lot of...
(pause)
It's like this, but white, and
cold.

Caldwell adeptly puts on a hood while still managing the horse.

CALDWELL
That would be snow. We get it too
during Dusksun.

AMALYE
I don't like this rain. Can you
make it stop?

CALDWELL
Do you stop the snow at your home?

AMALYE
I dunno. Not that we would. Issell
is a gift from Falicar, cause it is
as beautiful as he is. It is said
that the issell is Falicar's shed
feathers falling upon us.

CALDWELL
Okay. Long story short, I cannot
stop the rain.

Amalye lets out an exasperated sigh.

AMALYE
I don't like this.

CALDWELL
Well you just have to deal with it
for now. We'll be to Sanni before
long.

Amalye pounds her fists on the crates.

AMALYE
No! I refuse to accept it.

CALDWELL
There ain't much we can do about
it.

AMALYE
We could camp.

CALDWELL
The Salvi Hills are not as safe.
We're better off getting to Sanni.

AMALYE
No! Pull this cart over now!

Caldwell keeps driving.

AMALYE
I said now!

CALDWELL
We ain't stopping for some rain. We
will not stop until we reach Sanni.
Now stop yer whining.

Amalye huffs and folds her arms. The rain keeps falling, and
she begins to cry.

Caldwell sighs.

AMALYE
My wings are wet. My clothes are
sticky. I'm cold.

CALDWELL
Look, I'm
(pause)
Sorry. I shouldn't have snapped.
(pause)
(MORE)

CALDWELL (CONT'D)

We'll reach Sanni soon. You can dry off and... yeah.

EXT. SANNI - DAY

Caldwell and Amalye approach the walls of Sanni. The walls are made out of limestone. Behind the wall, three buildings tower over the rest.

The largest building is a tower surrounded by four slightly smaller towers. The second is a long rectangular building. The third is a flatter, sprawling building.

There is a distinct lack of guards at the gate as the two enter.

Caldwell hitches the horse to a post at a stable and assists Amalye off the wagon.

The two are suddenly surrounded by a sea of ERE.

MALE ERE

An Alphere!

OLD ERE

What is the Golden City like?

FEMALE ERE

Tell us about Falicar.

NERDY ERE

Who makes the fashion in Caelios?
Do you have contact with the Acoro?

Their questions overlap as Amalye is bombarded with questions.

She backs up against the wagon.

Caldwell tries to push his way to her.

MALE ERE

What do you eat?

YOUNG ERE

Do you understand the common tongue?

Amalye begins to breath heavily.

CALDWELL

Please. Move back. Amalye!

Durin, a male Ere who looks like he is in his mid twenties bobs up and down in the crowd as he slowly gets closer. He wears spectacles and has his hair tied in a small ponytail.

Amalye stands surrounded, flustered, her breathing erratic.

FEMALE ERE

Why did you leave Caelios?

OLD ERE

Who is in charge of Caelios?

MALE ERE

What is your artistic culture like?

Caldwell gets to Amalye. He begins pushing the Ere back.

CALDWELL

Back away from her.

(to Amalye)

Are you all right?

Amalye nods.

CALDWELL

We are not here to answer your questions. Go!

The Ere disperse, except for Durin. With the crowd gone, Durin adjusts his spectacles.

Amalye and Caldwell begin to walk down the dirt road.

Durin scrambles and rushes to them.

DURIN

(stuttering)

Hi. Hello.

Durin grabs at Amalye's shirt. Amalye lets out a scared shriek.

Caldwell spins around, getting between her and Durin.

CALDWELL

I told you all to back off.

Durin puts his hands up in defense.

DURIN

I mean no harm. I promise!

CALDWELL

I don't care. We ain't interested.

DURIN

Oh. I'm not selling anything. No,
no, no. I'm an anthropologist.

Caldwell rests his hand on his hilt.

DURIN

Now, now. There's no need for
violence. I just want to study her.

Amalye smirks.

CALDWELL

Get out of here, creep.

DURIN

Oh, you've got me all wrong.

Amalye walks around Caldwell.

CALDWELL

Amalye, stay behind me.

AMALYE

He seems okay.

Durin scratches the back of his head awkwardly.

DURIN

I am Durin Malthien.

He reaches his hand out.

DURIN

It would truly be an honor to learn
about your people.

Amalye does not shake his hand.

CALDWELL

Amalye, we do not need an Ere
following us around. He will slow
us down.

Durin gets a slight frown.

DURIN

I can be of use. I really won't be
a bother.

AMALYE

He can at least help us here.

DURIN

Yes, yes. Why did you come to Sanni? An unusual occurrence indeed.

Caldwell looks at Amalye and shakes his head.

AMALYE

I am looking for the Mace of Falicar.

DURIN

Who is to say if the artifacts of the gods exist to begin with? But, I do know where we can find information about such things.

Amalye glances back to Caldwell.

CALDWELL

And where would that be?

DURIN

The Grand Library, of course.

Durin gestures to the sprawling building.

DURIN

Centuries of knowledge, all stored within one building. If there's anything to know, it's in there.

Caldwell grabs Amalye's wrist and begins walking towards the library.

CALDWELL

Great. Thank you. We can take it from here.

Durin walks quickly to keep up.

DURIN

You'll definitely need me if you're trying to get in there. Strictly off limits if you're not a scholar like me.

CALDWELL

I'm sure they'll make an exception.

INT. GRAND LIBRARY - DAY

Caldwell and Amalye enter the library with Durin right behind them. The antechamber is a large open area with many desk and side study rooms. The main path leads up to a desk with an elderly librarian, Galeon, behind it.

DURIN

This library is a truly exquisite place. Continuously being expanded as our knowledge of the world expands. It contains all books, from scholarly works, to fiction, to purely pleasure reading.

The looks on Caldwell and Amalye's faces say Durin has been blabbering the whole walk.

DURIN

Someone did try to rob the library back in the third era. Thieves from the plateau. The Malere so whatever they can to earn a buck. But the attempt was quickly foiled as...

GALEON

Durin!

The librarian's shout echoes throughout the library.

Durin's excited demeanor quickly turns skiddish.

DURIN

Librarian Galeon, I didn't think you were working today.

GALEON

I've been expecting you. Breaking the rules again. I'm going to have to discuss this with Master Odier.

Durin's jaw drops.

DURIN

What did I do this time?

GALEON

Perhaps Archmage Halith's Treaties on the Arcane scattered themselves throughout the study hall.

Durin lets out a nervous chuckle.

GALEON

And I'm sure these two are new students and happen to be entering when you did.

DURIN

About that.

There's an awkward pause.

GALEON

You know the rules, Malthien.

DURIN

Yeah, but can't you make an exception, just this once?

GALEON

We've bent the rules enough for you.

Caldwell waves Amalye toward the door. He nods his head in that direction.

DURIN

Well, I suppose. But this time is different. These folk need our knowledge.

GALEON

Do not offer your ship to one who would sink it.

DURIN

Yes, yes. But without knowledge, the ignorant are doomed to destruction.

Galeon lets out a heavy sigh.

GALEON

I cannot have two outsiders in the library.

AMALYE

Excuse me, but we are looking for.

Caldwell hisses at her.

AMALYE

What?

DURIN

What if I have only one visitor?

GALEON
No visitors. Odier's order.

DURIN
We can't make an exception for a
unique visitor?

Galeon rubs his temples.

GALEON
No. No we cannot. No exceptions.
You are in enough as it is.

Durin sighs.

DURIN
All right. Book duty for a week.

GALEON
Durin.

DURIN
Two weeks!

GALEON
Book duty for two weeks, and you
get one visitor. Deal.

Durin pumps his fists. He turns to Caldwell and Amalye and
scratches his head.

DURIN
Well, uh...

CALDWELL
Will you be fine here with him?

AMALYE
I believe so.

CALDWELL
I'll be just outside if you need
me.

Caldwell exits the library.

DURIN
So what knowledge do you seek about
the mace?

AMALYE
It's location.

Durin frowns.

DURIN

Well, that's not exactly a known bit of information. You see, the mace only theoretically exists. And if it did, certainly Falicar would have it with him.

AMALYE

No. It does exist. Pilia was the first to wield it. It gave her incredible power.

DURIN

We do not have much on the history of the Alphere. But surely the existence of any artifact like that is purely hypothetical.

Amalye is getting flustered.

AMALYE

Well, let's see what you have.

She begins walking towards the hallway of bookshelves.

Durin quickly runs in front of her. Galeon motions to stop her as well.

DURIN

You will get lost in there. Every book in recorded history, and whatnot.

GALEON

(chuckling)

Book duty.

Amalye walks to Galeon.

AMALYE

Do you have The Early Days of Caelios, by Gileo Tamen?

Galeon continues looking through a book on his desk.

GALEON

Nope.

AMALYE

You didn't even check.

GALEON

That's an Alphere name. Your kind aren't keen on distributing their knowledge.

AMALYE

Well it's not like anyone else is worthy of the wisdom of Falicar.

Durin forces his way into the conversation.

DURIN

Well that wasn't always the case. The Alphere use to send clerics down here frequently.

Amalye turns to him, shocked.

AMALYE

The Alphere never leave Caelios. It is forbidden.

GALEON

And yet here you are.

DURIN

Can I get *The Tribes of Salvi*?

Galeon flips through the pages of another book sitting on the desk. A book floats from the aisles of bookshelves and lands on Galeon's desk.

Durin flips through the pages. He turns the book around, showing Amalye the page.

DURIN

It says right here, the Colis tribe.

Amalye raises her hand as to shush Durin.

AMALYE

The Colis tribe reached out to the Alphere.

The spectral image of an Ere woman, ULIA, appears beside them. She is muscular, wearing fur armor.

She approaches the spectral image of a female Alphere, Nascia. Nascia wears several layers of elaborate vestments.

Ulia bows before Nascia.

NASCIA
Stand Ulia. We always welcome one
of our sister tribes.

Ulia stands.

ULIA
I thought you liked people down on
their knees.

Ulia smirks, but Nascia is unimpressed.

ULIA
The war with the Maloro might not
have been your problem, but what
about uniting the Ere?

NASCIA
You're not the first to come to me.

Nascia bows her head.

ULIA
It was Hoal wasn't it?

Nascia remains silent.

ULIA
You agreed to help that swine.

Ulia throws her spear on the floor.

ULIA
Over me? Over Limal or Paug?

Nascia raises her head, her eyes glowing a bit.

NASCIA
I will tell you the same thing I
told them. We are a peaceful people
and will have no part in your feud.

ULIA
But it is your battle too! You are
as much an Ere as any other tribe
member.

NASCIA
Wrong! Those barbarians only care
about war. You all will no longer
be allowed in our halls. Be gone!

The spectral images of Ulia and Nascia disappear.

AMALYE

Nascia never held court with the tribes. She was one of the most esteemed Divines.

Amalye stumbles a bit and places her hand on the desk.

AMALYE

(fatigued)

I need to rest. Pray. Clear my head.

DURIN

Oh. We can go to the Temple of the All Gods.

Durin helps Amalye up.

INT. ERE TAVERN - DAY

Caldwell enters a tavern. The tavern is quite empty. A few kegs line a walk. A few tables, with only a couple patrons. A barkeep stands behind a desk, cleaning a glass.

Three ORO sit around one table with several empty glasses. They wear armor similar to Caldwell, but shinier and with no dents. The largest of the three, BRUE, waves at Caldwell.

BRUE

Ey, o'er here.

Caldwell approaches the table. FERIN, another of the Oro, slides a fourth chair back.

FERIN

You ain't a caravaneer.

Caldwell sits. NIER hands him a glass.

NIER

No reason to be rude, Ferin.

BRUE

What brings you to Sanni, friend?

Caldwell downs the drink in one gulp.

CALDWELL

Same thing as you, brother.

FERIN

Merchant armor doesn't see as much wear as knights.

Ferin points up and down Caldwell's armor.

BRUE

We were under the impression that
the only other north caravan was
out near the Merain Forest.

CALDWELL

I'm on a more personal errand.
Hired sword.

Brue raises his glass.

BRUE

Cheers to that!

They all drink.

CALDWELL

Always nice to see some of your own
in foreign lands.

NIER

The merchants are off doing their
job. Figured we ought to enjoy
ourselves too.

Ferin and Brue chuckle. The BARMAID comes over and fills
their cups.

FERIN

Never thought a knight would take a
mercenary contract.

CALDWELL

The girl's a pain.

NIER

(interrupting)
Ain't they all?

Nier elbows Caldwell.

CALDWELL

But she pays well. That's what's
important.

BRUE

Amen to that!

They take another swig.

CALDWELL

Where are you off to next?

BRUE
Guild master said we're off to
Bosene tomorrow.

NIER
That's a trek.

CALDWELL
Clear across the hills. No stops?

FERIN
Unlikely. The villages between here
and there, they don't offer much.

The doors to the tavern burst open as Mureel strides in,
accompanied by two guards.

Mureel and his guards storm to the barkeep.

FERIN
Get a load of that one.

NIER
T'ain't he the proper type?

Nier lifts the tip of his nose. The other laugh.

CALDWELL
An Alphere? Three, nonetheless.
What could they want?

BRUE
Thought they were hiding up their
mountain.

FERIN
Up to no good, for sure.

Mureel walks over and slams his fist on the table. He grabs
the nearest cup and dumps it.

BRUE
You paying for the next one,
friend?

MUREEL
We are searching for one of our
own. Any information you might have
would be greatly appreciated.

NIER
We ain't never seen an angel. Or
should we say chicken?

Nier flaps his arm like a chicken.

Mureel grits his teeth.

MUREEL

This is the Grand Divine's
daughter. I demand you tell me what
you know.

BRUE

We don't know nothing 'bout no
princess.

Mureel strokes his chin.

MUREEL

We have word she is here. What
brings the kingdom of man to the
Ere?

NIER

(chuckling)
Kingdom of man.

FERIN

Shows how much you birds know.

BRUE

We're merchant guards. Nothing
more.

Mureel walks behind Caldwell. He places his hand on
Caldwell's shoulder.

MUREEL

And what about you, friend?

He leans in closer. His grip tightens.

MUREEL

Been awfully quiet. Know anything?

CALDWELL

Just a merchant guard. Same caravan
as the others.

Brue and Nier nod in agreement.

BRUE

Roads are dangerous. Need a lot of
guards.

FERIN

Best stick to the skies, when you
can.

Mureel loosens his grip. He pats Caldwell on the back before
stepping back.

MUREEL

Well, if you find anything, the
Dominion will reward you,
handsomely. I hear your kind are
fond of valuables.

Mureel leaves.

INT. SANNI CHURCH - NIGHT

Durin escorts Amalye into the church. She is still faint.

The church is dim and claustrophobic. Cold stone lines the
walls. Very little decoration. Notably, six radiating chapels
surround the apse, each with a shrine of its own and a
stained glass window.

Going clockwise: a small potted tree before a woman in a
tree; a lyre before a water serpent; a crossed pickaxe and
scythe before a hearty looking man; a three horned bust
before a three horned centaur; a four armed fertility
figurine before a four armed woman with no eyes; a feather
before Falicar.

Falicar's shrine is the dirtiest of the six.

DURIN

This is the Temple of the All Gods.
The Ere and Oro don't really
worship a single god, so we made a
temple to encompass all the major
deities.

Amalye rubs her temple with her free hand.

DURIN

Very few followers of Falicar
though. So the shrine isn't well
kept.

Durin sets Amalye into a pew.

DURIN

Unfortunate, because our knowledge
of Falicar is quite limited.

Amalye passes out.

EXT. HEAVENS - DAY

Amalye wakes up in an area of pure light and clouds.

Falicar manifests from the light and offers her a hand.

She takes his hand and he lifts her to her feet.

FALICAR
Rise, my child. I need you now more
than ever. My power wanes, and I
fear the worse.

AMALYE
Master Falicar!

Amalye bows reverently.

FALICAR
I want you as my champion.

AMALYE
I will always serve you.

FALICAR
This is bigger than that. You must
be willing to give all in pursuit
of the Light.

The light of Falicar's eyes dims as he suddenly clutches his chest.

Amalye gasps.

AMALYE
What is wrong?

FALICAR
The Dominion has kept me sacred for
so long, but they have kept me
secret. They have kept the Light
from the world.

Amalye gives a solemn look.

AMALYE
There is nothing I can do about
that.

FALICAR

I need you to restore the Light.
Restore the Alphere. Travel to my
temple in the Amlen Valley. There
you will find my mace. There you
will prove yourself.

The light around them suddenly grows, blinding Amalye.

INT. SANNI CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The light fades, revealing Amalye in the church.

DURIN

That man is going to kill me. It's
nothing I did, but he surely isn't
going to believe that. Oh! What do
I do?

Amalye places her hand on her head. She rubs her forehead.

DURIN

Thank Aliron you're alive! You
aren't hurt or anything?

She swats him away.

AMALYE

I'm fine. I'm fine. I need to find
Caldwell. I know where I must go.

EXT. SANNI - NIGHT

Amalye walks down the street. Durin following close behind
her.

Caldwell exits the tavern. The two spot each other.

CALDWELL

I hope you're ready to go.

Amalye nods.

AMALYE

We need to head to the Amlen
Valley.

Durin butts in.

DURIN

Woah. We can't leave. And we
definitely cannot go there.

AMALYE

That is where Falicar wants me to go. That is where we are going.

CALDWELL

You aren't gonna stop us from leaving.

Caldwell rests his hand on the hilt of his sword.

DURIN

Oh no. I wouldn't stop you. But the city guards will. No one is allowed in or out of the city after dark. Been a lot of dangerous folk.

CALDWELL

I can handle it. Won't pose no threat to us.

DURIN

Well, the guards will not care. You both could stay at my place for the night.

Caldwell sighs.

CALDWELL

We need to get out of here as soon as possible.

AMALYE

Wait. Why can we not go to the valley?

Durin scratches his head.

DURIN

Come. Let's get off the street.

They begin to walk, following Durin's lead.

DURIN

The valley is a dangerous place. Not even the highest level casters from the college go there. We can talk to Hallith in the morning.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Harx walks through a damp cave. Stalactites hang, dripping into small ponds beneath them.

He is escorted by a large, muscular, purple skinned GRUNT. A MALERE.

The two enter a more opened section of the cave. Small shacks built around the area, lit up by oil lanterns.

The two approach a table. At the head of the table is ARTHIN. She is clothed in leather and cloth. Her skin is a lighter shade of purple than the grunt. Her sharp ears have many rings.

Arthin is juggling a knife.

The grunt shoves Harx towards the table.

ARTHIN
Heard you were looking for me.

HARX
This one need your help.

Arthin chuckles.

ARTHIN
I can see that. You'll have to be more specific.

HARX
Our lord is after a girl. You help capture her. Bring her to Pandario.

Arthin catches the knife and stabs it into the table.

ARTHIN
I don't babysit.

HARX
No babysit. You deal with Oro, I take bird.

ARTHIN
Bird? You mean an Alphere left their mountain?

Arthin scratches her chin.

HARX
Yes, yes. Bird. We need bird. Our lord needs bird.

ARTHIN
I'll make one thing straight. I do nothing on behalf of Carsino.
(MORE)

ARTHIN (CONT'D)
(under her breath)
Done nothing for us.

Harx slams his hands on the table.

HARX
You would dare disobey our lord?
After all his gifts?

Arthin stands up.

ARTHIN
Smack my table again, and you'll
lose those hands. Unless you've got
something more enticing than
fighting an Oro for a bird, you'd
best be going.

Harx snarls.

HARX
She is royalty. She probably has
shinies.

Arthin licks her lips.

ARTHIN
Now you're talking my language.

HARX
Help bring her to Pandario, you get
to keep treasures.

There's a gleam in Arthin's eye.

ARTHIN
I think we can come to an
arrangement.

Arthin waves the grunt over to her.

He walks next to her and bends down. Arthin whispers in his
ear.

The grunt nods and leaves.

ARTHIN
So where are we going?

Harx scratches his arm. Large flakes of skin fall off.

HARX
This one lost them.

Arthin sighs, then whistles.

A four eyed crow flies in and lands in Arthin's forearm. Its claws dig into her arm, but no blood oozes out.

ARTHIN
We'll find them.

The crow caws, revealing a row of razor sharp teeth.

INT. MAGE COLLEGE - DAY

Durin leads Caldwell and Amalye into the mage college. The room is large, with many bookshelves lining the walls. There is a central tower with a desk in front of it. The walls are stone and little balls of light illuminating the area.

STUDENTS look and books and practice spells. A STEWARDESS sits behind the desk.

DURIN
This is the famous Sanni Mage College. People travel from all over Alinon to study from the Ere sorcerers.

CALDWELL
I think that speaks for itself. With this much magic built up in one place, it only takes a spark to destroy the whole city.

Caldwell rolls his eyes.

DURIN
Well I doubt our lovely feathered friend would know about this. Do the Alphere have magic? I mean, everyone has the potential, but they actively practice it?

AMALYE
The priestesses practice, but they only do light and healing magic.

Durin walks up the stewardess.

DURIN
Fascinating. Unfortunately, since you are not members of the college, we cannot go up the tower to meet the Archmage.

Caldwell leans on the desk. He lets out a heavy sigh.

The stewardess giggles.

DURIN
Excuse me, miss.

Durin turns to the stewardess.

DURIN
Could you contact Archmage Hallith
and tell her she has visitors?

STEWARDESS
The Archmage is a very busy woman.
Do you have an appointment?

Durin frowns.

DURIN
Well, no. This is important! Surely
she would want to meet an Alphere.

HALLITH (O.S.)
You wouldn't be wrong.

They turn around to see HALLITH. She is an older Ere, wearing a blue dress that is far too elegant and elaborate to be functional.

She approaches them slowly and methodically.

DURIN
Amalye. Caldwell. Meet Archmage
Hallith.

Hallith extends her hand as a queen would a commoner.

Amalye curtsies. Caldwell nods.

Hallith takes back her hand with a look of disgust.

HALLITH
The pleasure is all mine.

Hallith pulls a book out of her robe. It is a poorly crafted book, stuffed with pages.

HALLITH
I believe you left this after your
last class.

Durin scratches his head as he takes the book.

DURIN

I wondered where I left that. Thank you, Archmage.

Hallith turns to Amalye.

HALLITH

I have many questions for you, but it seems you are in a rush. With what can I assist you?

AMALYE

I had a vision of Falicar where he told me I must travel to the Amlen Valley.

Hallith takes a step back in shock.

DURIN

I already told them, Archmage, that it is out of the question.

AMALYE

It is what my god wants. I must go.

HALLITH

You will not last a day out there. There are forces in the valley that not even I would dare face.

AMALYE

Falicar will keep me safe.

HALLITH

You foolish girl. The gods care not for any of us.

Amalye steps closer to Hallith.

AMALYE

You're wrong. I am Falicar's champion.

Hallith stares into her eyes.

HALLITH

You're delusional, child. You have an aura to you, but nothing compared to the primal energy of the valley. No god has power down there.

Amalye begins to turn red.

AMALYE

I will prove myself to Falicar. I
will go to the valley.

Hallith's composure remains unchanged.

HALLITH

Then you will die. You have spent
so long up on that mountain, being
brainwashed. Taught that your faith
in Falicar will keep you safe.

AMALYE

Stop!

HALLITH

Your fantasies of being the chosen
one are just visions of grandeur
induced by living in a society of
zealots.

Amalye stomps her foot.

AMALYE

Enough!

Amalye grabs Caldwell's wrist and storms out of the college.

DURIN

I should probably go.

Durin nods politely to Hallith and chases after Amalye.

EXT. SANNI - DAY

Caldwell stops Amalye outside the college and grasps her
shoulders.

CALDWELL

Listen, those Ere don't know
everything. They like to think
themselves all high and mighty.

Tears bead in Amalye's eyes.

CALDWELL

I believe you, and I will help you.
Even if they say we're walking to
our death. All that matters is that
you believe in yourself.

Amalye wipes the tears. Her eyes suddenly go wide.

Durin runs into the unusually barren streets of Sanni.

Amalye and Caldwell stand still, staring forward.

DURIN

Guys, wait. I know what Hallith
said, and I.

MUREEL (O.S.)

Hand her over.

Durin turns to see Mureel accompanied by two Alphere guards.

CALDWELL

Amalye, get behind me.

Caldwell turns to Durin.

CALDWELL

You'd better just leave.

Caldwell unsheathes his sword.

MUREEL

This is your last chance. Give us
the girl.

Mureel pulls out a handle. Light emerges from the handle,
solidifying into a spear.

AMALYE

Mureel, please! Don't do this!
(to Caldwell)
Let's go. We can run.

CALDWELL

I can't outrun them. They fly.

Caldwell adjusts his footing. His blade held steadily before
him.

CALDWELL

If you want her, you'll have to go
through me.

MUREEL

You chose your fate when you messed
with the daughter of the Grand
Divine.

Mureel signals to the guards, and then flies forward.

Mureel quickly approaches Caldwell, with the guards not far
behind.

Caldwell raises his sword, prepared to strike.

With Mureel almost in range, Durin suddenly jumps between him and Caldwell, book in his hand.

DURIN

Zenaros!

Mureel is flung backwards as a strong gust emanates from Durin.

The guards struggle, but are quickly thrown back too.

Durin's leg trembles.

Caldwell sheathes his sword as Mureel continues to be pushed back.

Durin suddenly falls to his knees.

AMALYE

Come on! Come on!

Amalye pulls at Caldwell.

CALDWELL

(to Durin)

You don't stop, do you?

Caldwell picks up Durin and runs. The wind stops.

EXT. SALVI HILLS - DAY

Caldwell sits at the reins of the cart, steering through the bleak landscape of the Salvi Hills.

Amalye and Durin sit in the back, surrounded by various boxes.

Amalye rests her head on a box, while Durin eagerly writes in his book.

DURIN

Truly fascinating. Please, please.
Continue.

Amalye sighs heavily.

DURIN

You don't by any chance have the ceremonial mask with you? I would love to get a sketch of it for our records.

AMALYE

No. The masks don't leave the cathedral.

Durin hastily writes.

DURIN

Can you describe it to me.

AMALYE

They were made of aurium and covered all but our eyes.

Durin continues to scribble. Amalye rolls her eyes.

DURIN

Now your people are master crafters of aurium? It has been a notable craft for smiths down here. Even the best Oro smiths struggle when casting aurium.

Caldwell grunts.

CALDWELL

Better than any Ere smiths.

Amalye flops over onto her back. She stares into the sky. A single crow flies above them.

AMALYE

I dunno. I guess? I don't hang out with the peasants.

DURIN

Right. I suppose that makes sense, you being the daughter of the Grand Divine and all.

Durin looks up to see Amalye's reaction.

DURIN

You must have all the insider information of the political and religious sides of the Dominion.

Amalye sits up.

AMALYE

I'd really rather not talk about that. It's not like I wanted any of this.

DURIN
Okay. I won't push.

There is a moment of silence.

DURIN
So what is the food like up there?

Caldwell turns back.

CALDWELL
Do you ever stop talking?

Durin's energetic demeanor suddenly drops.

Caldwell faces forward once more. The decent into the valley has started.

DURIN
There is still time to turn around
and leave.

CALDWELL
There's still time for you to go.

Durin looks away from the valley, the direction they came from.

DURIN
I suppose someone with a sense of
reason needs to be around.

The crow caws.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Arthin and Harx watch Caldwell's wagon traveling into the valley through the eye of the crow.

ARTHIN
There's your target.

Arthin swings her hand and walks away. Her posse follows.

INT. ALSEAN MANOR - DAY

Mureel enters the manor with his guards.

Uryth paces around the room frantically.

MUREEL
Father, I have found her.

Uryth stops pacing and rushes to Mureel.

URYTH
Where is she?

MUREEL
That is the problem.

Uryth grabs Mureel's collar.

URYTH
I gave you one simple job. Retrieve your sister.

MUREEL
That's hard to do when she has been kidnapped.

URYTH
Kidnapped?

MUREEL
An Oro knight and an Ere mage have her.

Uryth drops Mureel.

URYTH
Of course. The first of our people to show their faces around the faithless and they take my dear hostage.

Uryth moves over to the table.

URYTH
She will have to pray extensively to remove the taint from the faithless.

Mureel walks over to Uryth.

MUREEL
I do not understand, father. Why is it so important that she be the next Grand Divine? I could just as easily.

Uryth slaps Mureel across the face.

URYTH
Send an envoy to the Oro. Tell them that if they do not release Amalye, it will mean war.

Mureel, rubbing his face, walks out with his guards.

Uryth walks to the portrait of Yeeala. He rubs his hand along the portrait.

URYTH

Don't worry, my dear. I will save you.

EXT. AMLEN VALLEY - DAY

Caldwell drives the cart through the valley. The terrain is rocky and gravelly.

Durin keeps his head on a swivel, watching both sides of the cart.

Elemental beings roam the valley. A large rock monster slowly stumbles around. A tornado of fire with a vague human shape appearing above it whirls swiftly.

A purple being launches an orb at another rock monster. The orb impacts, shattering the rock monster.

Durin's teeth chatter.

The cart moves slowly, Caldwell sure to avoid contact with any of the beings.

A temple carved into the side of the wall comes into view. The walls are crackled and crumbling. The capitals are flowery, yet fiery, though some have fallen off their pillars.

Amalye perks up at the sight.

AMALYE

This is the place.

Durin shushes her.

DURIN

(whispering)

We don't want to attract unwanted attention.

CALDWELL

Night is falling. We can use this as shelter for the night.

DURIN

Are you crazy? We shouldn't even be down here. And you want to disturb an ancient temple?

Caldwell jumps off the horse and hitches it to a pillar.

CALDWELL

Well, if you'd rather stay out here, so be it.

Caldwell helps Amalye off the cart.

Caldwell and Amalye enter the temple.

Durin looks at a creature made of pure electricity. He jumps off the cart and rushes to the temple.

INT. ANCIENT TEMPLE - ANTECHAMBER - NIGHT

Caldwell lights a torch, revealing decorated walls, cracked and covered in webs. Mosaics depict happy Ere and gods in bright, elaborate colors.

Caldwell brushes some of the webs away.

Durin slowly enters.

AMALYE

This is the place Falicar described.

DURIN

Surely we will upset some ancestral spirits by being in here.

AMALYE

This is where the mace is for sure.

CALDWELL

I'm no scholar, but these pictures seem to show Falicar.

Caldwell points at a mosaic of Falicar surrounded by Ere.

AMALYE

Are there any that show my people?

Amalye looks around, but keeps her distance from the walls.

Caldwell brushes webs off, taking cursory glances.

Durin stands in the middle of the room, fidgeting.

AMALYE
I'm not seeing anything.

CALDWELL
Me either.

DURIN
(chittery)
It makes sense though. This place
would have been constructed long
before the Alphere were granted his
favor.

CALDWELL
You said we're looking for a
weapon? We'll have to check deeper.

DURIN
Must we?

INT. ANCIENT TEMPLE - INNER CHAMBER - NIGHT

The group enters a room with a pedestal in the center. On the
pedestal is a rusty mace. The walls contain more mosaics of
Falicar wielding the mace and slaying his foes.

Amalye perks up and runs towards the mace.

AMALYE
We found it!

CALDWELL
Careful! It could be...

As Amalye gets close, a gryphon jumps out from behind the
pedestal.

CALDWELL
...trapped.

The gryphon screeches at Amalye.

Amalye runs back to Caldwell. He pulls her behind him.
Caldwell takes out his sword.

Durin fumbles with his book and drops it.

The gryphon lunges forward, knocking the book away. Caldwell
swings with the torch, and the gryphon moves back.

AMALYE
Don't hurt it! It's one of
Falicar's creatures.

CALDWELL

I don't think it'll do the same.

Caldwell swings his sword again. The beast jumps again.

Durin crawls trying to recover his book.

The gryphon circles around Caldwell, who keeps Amalye behind him. It flaps its wings and caws.

The gryphon lunges forward, clawing at Caldwell. Caldwell deflects it with his sword, pushing Amalye back against the wall.

Durin gets his book and stands up.

DURIN

A-ha! My turn.

Durin flips through the pages.

Caldwell hands Amalye the torch. He then kicks the gryphon, who stumbles backwards.

Durin raises his hand in the air.

DURIN

Avaln jes-

The gryphon lunges at Durin, who screams.

Caldwell bodychecks the gryphon into the wall.

AMALYE

Try not to hurt it, please?

CALDWELL

Doing my best.

The gryphon bats Caldwell with its wing. It then slices at his armor with its claw.

Durin steps forward.

DURIN

Avaln jesaut.

Durin's clenches his hand into a fist. A purple wall appears between them and the gryphon.

Caldwell loosens his pose.

CALDWELL

That'll give us some time.

DURIN
Well, it will, but unfortunately,
it won't hold for long.

Durin notions to the wall. The gryphon slashes at the wall.
Cracks appear with each slash.

Caldwell tightens his grip.

CALDWELL
You don't have anything stronger?

DURIN
I'm just a scholar. Magic isn't my
expertise.

The gryphon smashes through the wall and screeches.

Caldwell raises his sword, but Amalye grabs his arm. She
steps forward to the gryphon.

CALDWELL
Amalye!

AMALYE
Before the power of Falicar,
begone!

Amalye shoos the beast. The gryphon lunges at her.

She shrieks as Caldwell pushes her aside. The claw catches
him in the arm.

Caldwell brings his sword up and catches the gryphon across
the eye. It screeches in pain.

The gryphon hops around and claws at Caldwell, but swings
wide.

Amalye steps forward again.

AMALYE
I said, begone!

A burst of light emanates from her. The beast cowers and
retreats into a hallway.

AMALYE
You hurt the thing. I asked you not
to do that.

Caldwell clutches his scratched arm.

CALDWELL
I did what I could.

DURIN
What was that you did to scare it away?

AMALYE
I'm not sure. I've never done that before.

She turns to look at the mace.

AMALYE
That's the mace of Falicar? It's so old and gross.

CALDWELL
It's been in an old temple for who knows how long.

AMALYE
But Falicar is beauty and light.
This is.
(pause)
Not.

Amalye picks the mace up.

DURIN
Either way, it is most impressive that the artifact even exists. Many stories are told of the gods wielding such weapons. This lends credence to those stories. How many other artifacts exist?

Amalye swings the mace side to side.

AMALYE
I would have expected this to be heavier.

CALDWELL
Careful. Don't want to hurt yourself.

Durin jots down notes.

DURIN
Do you feel anything while using it? Has Falicar given you divine strength? Tell me everything.

AMALYE

I don't feel any different.

Amalye spins around, mimicking some of Caldwell's moves.

The mace hits the pedestal mid-swing and turns to dust.

Tears swell in her eyes.

DURIN

What have you done?! An ancient artifact, destroyed.

Caldwell rushes to Amalye.

DURIN

All that we could have learned from that! It could have had magical properties.

Amalye cries.

CALDWELL

Durin, enough! Not the time.

Durin goes silent. Caldwell pulls Amalye in.

CALDWELL

It's okay. It was an accident. Thing probably lost all power a long time ago. Not like you could have used it for anything.

He pats her on the back.

CALDWELL

I think maybe it's time we get you home.

AMALYE

I can't go back. I can't live like that.

CALDWELL

I think it's for the best. You'll be safer there.

No response.

CALDWELL

Let's get out of here. Resupply. Then we will see.

DURIN

We are not far from Bosene. We can stop there. They have supplies from the jungle.

CALDWELL

That sound good?

Amalye stops crying and looks up.

AMALYE

Okay.

INT. ALSEAN MANOR - DAY

Uryth sits in a chair, reading a paper.

Mureel stands nearby with a few guards.

URYTH

Who does this savage think he is?

MUREEL

He is a fool, for sure, father.

Uryth stands up.

URYTH

Denies having my daughter and threatening a war? Assemble the forces now. I will not stand such a disgrace.

MUREEL

Of course. I can have the men ready to march tomorrow.

Uryth stands before Mureel.

URYTH

You will not be leading the war.
You still have to save your sister.

Veloe enters the chamber, escorted by a guard.

VELOE

Uryth! What is this I hear about a war with the Oro?

URYTH

They kidnapped my daughter. They will pay.

VELOE

This is unwise. The Oro just were at war with the Maloro. Our army will stand no chance against them.

Uryth storms over to Veloe.

URYTH

You dare question the word of Falicar?

VELOE

Fighting is not the way of the Light. Falicar would never order this.

URYTH

You would be wise to remember your position, Veloe. Do you claim to know our Lord's word better than I?

VELOE

I was Grand Divine once. I know.

URYTH

But you aren't now, are you?

Veloe stares intently at Uryth.

URYTH

I suggest you leave. I do not take kindly to insubordination.

Veloe begins to leave.

URYTH

And in the future, you will address me as Grand Divine.

Veloe glares at Uryth.

EXT. BOSENE - DAY

The party arrives at Bosene, a small town with a central road full of small market tents. The settlement is predominantly Oro, but there are a number of lithe, olive skinned elves walking around. The BOTERE have long limbs and move with grace.

Outside of the town, there is mostly farmland. Touching the south side of the town is the Merrain Forest, a dense wall of trees and vines.

As they pass by a stall, Brue approaches the cart.

BRUE
Knight Caldwell!

Ferin and Nier also appear.

FERIN
What brings the knight to little
ole Bosene?

CALDWELL
Gotta restock. Traveling back to
Loreps soon.

NIER
That's quite the journey.

FERIN
Passing through Andor, or Canice?

CALDWELL
Probably Canice. More direct.
Where's the hitching post?

Brue looks back to the ORO running the stall. They both nod.

BRUE
I'll show you.

Brue walks alongside the cart.

EXT. BOSENE - DAY

Caldwell walks around the market stalls with Amalye. They stop at a Botere stall with carved trinkets. The MERCHANT behind the stall whittles.

Caldwell picks up a trinket of a six-legged reptile.

CALDWELL
You like this? This is an aganti.

Amalye just has a sad look on her face. She shakes her head.

Caldwell places the trinket down.

CALDWELL
Things will be better. But I think
you should go home.

Amalye turns her head away.

The merchant taps on the table.

MERCHANT

For you. I have never seen one of
your kind.

He has a wooden eagle in his hand.

Amalye takes the eagle. She looks it over in her hand before
pocketing it.

She begins to walk away. Caldwell pulls out his coin pouch.

MERCHANT

No coin.

The botere merchant shakes his hands.

Caldwell catches up to Amalye.

CALDWELL

Are you not going to say anything?

Amalye looks up to the sky. There are a couple crows flying.

AMALYE

Those are the most peculiar birds.

Caldwell looks up at the birds. The birds swoop down towards
him.

Caldwell dodges the first bird, but the second catches his
shoulder.

CALDWELL

Get behind me.

ARTHIN (O.S.)

You have something I want.

Caldwell and Amalye look to see Arthin striding towards them.
Harx and a muscular Minoro walk behind her. The crows land on
her shoulders.

ARTHIN

Hand over the Alphere, and I'll
spare your life, knight.

Caldwell pulls out his sword. Several more BANDITS appear.

CALDWELL

You'll have to get through me.

ARTHIN

I was hoping you'd say that.

She flicks her wrists and two daggers slide out of her sleeves.

DURIN (O.S.)

So I managed to get us a week's worth of food. Should be plenty enough to get us to Canice.

Durin walks out of a tent.

DURIN

More friends of yours?

The Minoro charges at him. Durin rushes to Caldwell.

The Minoro gets close to Caldwell and Caldwell swings. The cut goes deep into the leather armor.

CALDWELL

Run, Amalye!

The Minoro decks Caldwell. Caldwell stumbles back.

ARTHIN

Get her!

Amalye hesitates. The bandits start to advance.

Caldwell trips the Minoro and slashes at him. The Minoro blocks with his arms, resulting in bloody gashes on both.

Amalye runs towards the jungle.

CALDWELL

Tell me you have something for this, Durin.

Durin begins flipping through the pages of his book.

The Minoro hops up and knocks away Caldwell's sword. Caldwell punches him in the face. The Minoro goes down.

The bandits get ever closer.

Durin stops on a page. It has a poor drawing of a Malere frowning near fire.

Durin waves his hand.

DURIN

Selama ashal!

Fire spreads from Durin's hand, leaving a line on the ground. The bandits reel. Arthin covers her face with her hand.

Caldwell and Durin make a break for the tree line.

Arthin sends the crows after them. A few of the bandits begin stomping out the fire. Harx dives through the fire on all fours.

The crows swoop at Durin and Caldwell, slowing down their pace.

Harx is catching up, right on their heels, when he is suddenly tackled by Brue from an alley.

Ferin and Nier charge out of the alley. Ferin has a warhammer and Nier a battle ax.

NIER

Looks like you need some backup.

FERIN

Don't be thinking we'd miss out on a fight.

The fire is out and the bandits charge again. Brue pummels Harx.

Ferin steps forward and bashes one of the bandits with his hammer. The bandit is sent flying.

DURIN

Now is our chance to flee.

Durin tugs at Caldwell's tunic. Caldwell doesn't move.

CALDWELL

I can't leave them here. I have to help.

Nier slashes at one of the bandits who dodges.

One of the bandits jumps on Brue's back. Harx kicks Brue off him.

Ferin swings at the next bandit, but misses. The bandit then stabs him in the stomach. Ferin retaliates with a headbutt.

Caldwell slashes at the bandit on Brue's back. The bandit lets go of Brue.

Nier takes another slash at a bandit, catching it in the chest. Another bandit lunges at Nier.

Harx scampers back to Arthin's side. Brue rips the bandit off Nier and crushes him in a bear hug. Nier imbeds his ax in the bandit's head.

Ferin charges Arthin. He swings heavily, but her lithe body allows her to dodge with ease. She is clearly playing with him.

Nier notices and runs at Arthin. The crows swoop in and distract him.

Arthin pushes another dagger into Ferin's wound.

ARTHIN

You're a fun bunch. But I have a bounty to collect.

She pushes another dagger into Ferin's shoulder. He drops his hammer as he cries out in pain.

BRUE

Ferin!

Brue sprints at Arthin. Harx dives at him. The two lock in a grapple.

Arthin twists the dagger in Ferin's stomach before removing it and stabbing it into his jaw. Blood seeps from his agape mouth.

BRUE

Be best if you ran now. We can't all die here.

Harx knees Brue in the gut and flips him over.

CALDWELL

Thank you, brothers.

Caldwell and Durin run for the trees.

Bandits swarm Nier and Brue.

Arthin and Harx run after Caldwell and Durin, who run into the thick of the woods.

As they reach the edge of the forest, large vines suddenly burst from the ground. The vines swing and grasps at Harx and Arthin. They back off.

EXT. MERAIN FOREST - DAY

Caldwell and Durin slowly walk through the dense jungle.
Caldwell pushes aside bushes, vines, and branches.

DURIN
The forest can be quite dangerous.

Durin looks around nervously.

DURIN
I hope nothing bad has happened.
She can't have made it that far,
could she?

CALDWELL
Amalye!

Caldwell chops at some of the underbrush.

DURIN
I would advise against that.

Caldwell huffs and pushes aside more of the brush.

DURIN
Surely she'll be safe. She could
just fly out of here, and avoid all
the beasts that lurk about.

Durin looks up at the foliage. He then pokes at Caldwell.

DURIN
Right?

Caldwell pulls his shoulder away.

CALDWELL
I'm sure she'll be fine.

Caldwell trips on a root. He gets up, brushing off the dirt
and grass.

CALDWELL
Damn this forest. Damn these trees.

He begins hacking at the greenery.

DURIN
You really shouldn't.

CALDWELL
Damn all these vines and bushes.
Amalye!

An arrow flies between Caldwell and Durin, embedding in a tree. Caldwell readies himself, while Durin cowers behind him.

KAT (O.S.)
If you don't like the forest, I'll
give you a quick way out.

KAT'ALIA, a lithe botere with browner skin emerges from the trees. Her wardrobe is far from any definition of modest. She has green paint smeared over parts of her body. Her bow is drawn, pointed at Caldwell.

KAT
Splain yourselves.

Durin steps forward.

DURIN
We mean no harm!

Kat jerks her bow to aim at Durin.

Caldwell takes the opportunity to lunge forward. Before he can even take a step, Kat fires an arrow at him. The arrow sticks in his armor and vines burst from the ground, ensnaring Caldwell.

Kat instantly nocks another arrow.

Durin shakes his hands vigorously.

DURIN
Woah woah woah. No. Please. We're
looking for our friend.

Caldwell struggles against the vines.

CALDWELL
Let me go, witch.

DURIN
She's an Alphere, came in before we
did.

KAT
I think it best you two leave.

DURIN
It's important we find her. There
are assassins after us.

Kat's head suddenly jerks towards the forest.

KAT

Stay put.

She fires an arrow at Durin, and vines tie him to a tree.

She straps her bow to her back and she jumps to a tree branch, disappearing into the woods.

DURIN

Well, that was unexpected. At least
we're not dead.

Durin looks at Caldwell with a grin. Caldwell sighs.

Caldwell and Durin struggle against the vines.

EXT. MERAIN FOREST - DAY

Amalye flies through the forest, doing her best to dodge vines, limbs, and trunks.

She looks behind her briefly to see a large eyeless black cat with three tails leaping from branch to branch after her.

She looks forward again and attempts to avoid a vine, but her arm gets snagged and she falls to the ground.

The cat leaps in front of her.

AMALYE

By the light of Falicar...

Amalye stands up.

AMALYE

... begone, beast!

Amalye throws her hands forward, as if to use magic. Nothing happens.

The cat snarls and then lunges.

Kat swings in and kicks the cat midair.

She knocks an arrow and fires, but the cat dodges by leaping at a tree trunk.

It leaps off the tree at Kat, but she jumps to a branch.

Amalye hunches down and covers herself with her wings.

Kat swings from branch to branch as the cat tails her.

She deftly swings from a branch and does a backflip, firing an arrow in the motion that embeds in between where the cat's eyes should be.

The cat hits the ground with a thud. It stumbles to get up. One of its tails pulls the arrow from its head. The cat hisses before dashing into the woods.

Kat lands gracefully and approaches Amalye.

KAT
You are safe now, outsider.

Kat offers Amalye a hand.

KAT
You really shouldn't...

Amalye raises her head and Kat is speechless. Amalye takes her hand.

Kat doesn't respond. Amalye pulls herself up.

Durin and Caldwell charge in.

CALDWELL
Amalye!

DURIN
You're safe!

Amalye rushes over to them.

AMALYE
She saved me. Quite impressive moves.

DURIN
The botere thrive in the jungle.

Amalye walks back to Kat.

AMALYE
What is your name? I must thank you arriving when you did.

Kat stands mouth agape. She retracts her hand and brushes her hair back.

KAT
I am Kat'Alia, but most just call me Kat.

Durin steps forward.

DURIN

You aren't referred to by your
tribal name?

Kat rubs her shoulder awkwardly.

CALDWELL

It is impressive to see a woman
botere so skilled in the ways of
the hunter. Thought you were all
witches.

DURIN

(whispering)

They prefer the term dryads.

Caldwell pushes him away.

DURIN

Please, if it's not too much, we
could use a rest after everything.
A moment to recover.

Kat waves them on.

KAT

I can take you to the Alia tribe.
Don't expect them to be so
welcoming.

The group walks into the forest.

EXT. ALIA CAMP - DAY

Kat leads Amalye, Caldwell, and Durin into a makeshift
campsite. Several small tents dot the site with one large
tent near the center.

A few MALE BOTERE swing in and stand near a group of other
botere. They stare at the party and murmur to each other.

Approaching the main tent, there are several FEMALE BOTERE
gathered around cauldrons and tables and little KIDS run
around.

Kat approaches the middle cauldron and bows reverently.

Behind the cauldron is the eldest of the females, the BONE
MOTHER. Unlike the other women, she wears heavy cloaks. A
necklace of various animal bones adorns her neck. She stands
swirling the cauldron.

BONE MOTHER
You've returned, child.

The rest of the druids leave when Kat is acknowledged. They sneer and murmur.

KAT
Bone Mother, sincerest apologies.

BONE MOTHER
Who are you friends, deary?

Kat looks back to the group.

Amalye steps forward.

AMALYE
I am Amalye, daughter of the Grand Divine.

She signals to Caldwell and Durin.

AMALYE
These are my friends and companions, Caldwell and Durin.

The Bone Mother stops stirring.

BONE MOTHER
The Earth Mother warned us you might be approaching. Marily has good relations with Falicar.

Amalye is taken aback.

CALDWELL
We mean you no harm, I assure you.

The Bone Mother dismisses him with a wave.

BONE MOTHER
If you did, you would not be speaking to me now.

KAT
Asha'Alia, I know what was decided, but please, let them stay a day to recover. They were attacked by a trither.

BONE MOTHER
I know, dear, I know.

The Bone Mother looks at the party.

BONE MOTHER

You will be permitted to rest here,
so long as you don't cause trouble.

She looks back to Kat.

BONE MOTHER

You know the arrangement we made.

Kat bows reverently again.

EXT. OUTSIDE ALIA CAMP - DAY

Caldwell, Amalye, and Kat are just outside the Alia camp.
Durin can be seen in the camp sketching in his book.

Amalye sits crisscross applesauce with Kat on a tree stump
next to her. Caldwell practices his swings on a training
dummy.

Caldwell finishes a combo of swings and Kat hops off the
stump.

KAT

Your skills are impressive. But you
may learn a thing or two.

She draws a sword as she approaches the dummy.

CALDWELL

(chuckling)

There's nothing you can show me.

Kat does a quick combo of strikes, and her foot slips on the
last swing.

She topples over and falls on Amalye. Caldwell lets out a
hearty laugh.

AMALYE

Hey!

Caldwell helps Kat up.

CALDWELL

You're not bad, but you could use
some practice.

KAT

I swear, I've never had that.

CALDWELL

It's all right.

Caldwell helps position Kat. He kicks her feet to spread her legs into a better stance.

CALDWELL
Much like swinging from branches,
swinging a sword requires proper
balance.

Kat performs the same combo of swings, except this time she doesn't fall.

KAT
Fantastic.

She unleashed another flurry of blows.

Kat walks over to Amalye. She flips the sword around to offer it to Amalye.

KAT
Your turn.

Amalye shakes her hands.

AMALYE
Oh no. I couldn't.

Kat pokes her with the hilt.

KAT
It is important to know how to
fight.

AMALYE
The Light forbids taking up arms in
battle.

KAT
Defense is an important skill. You
can't rely on others for
protection. One must learn to fight
for themselves.

CALDWELL
It wouldn't hurt, Amalye.

Amalye reaches for the sword, but hesitates.

CALDWELL
(under his breath)
Especially after what happened to
the mace.

Amalye's face turns red.

She hops up and snatches the dagger. She storms over to the dummy and starts hacking at it.

CALDWELL
Hey! Amalye!

She continues slashing. Kat looks on shocked.

CALDWELL
Amalye, stop!

She continues. Tears start rolling down her face.

Caldwell grabs her arms. She struggles against him to try to keep swinging.

AMALYE
Let me go!

Amalye drops the sword, but continues to struggle.

CALDWELL
You're gonna hurt yourself.

AMALYE
No! I will not go back! I will not stop!

She turns around and cries into Caldwell's shoulder.

CALDWELL
Just cause you're going back,
doesn't mean you have to stop
fighting.

Kat walks over and puts a hand on Amalye's shoulder.

KAT
Always fight for what you believe
in.

Amalye calms down. She pushes herself away from Caldwell.

AMALYE
I'm ready to learn.

Caldwell nods. He picks up Kat's sword and gives it to Amalye. He shows her how to stand and swing.

EXT. MERAIN FOREST - DAY

Kat leads the group out of the forest.

AMALYE

You could come with us.

KAT

Nay. The forest is my home.

DURIN

Be sure to thank your tribe again
for us. It was a fantastic
experience.

Kat scratches her head.

KAT

Yeah. I'll be sure to do that.

(pause)

Safe travels.

Kat jumps back into the trees, disappearing.

CALDWELL

It will take a few days, but it
should be a straight shot to Canice
if we follow the mountains.

EXT. SALVI HILLS - DAY

Caldwell leads Amalye and Durin across the hills.

DURIN

The botere are truly unique. They
live strictly off the jungle, with
little contact with any of the
other kingdoms. There's so much
they could teach us.

Durin looks at Amalye.

DURIN

Much like the Alphere. Secrets to
reveal.

MUREEL (O.S.)

Amalye!

The group looks to the mountain to see Mureel and his guards
flying down.

CALDWELL

You again.

MUREEL

It's time to come home. Father has forgiven you.

The Alphere ready their weapons. Caldwell draws his sword.

MUREEL

Step back from my sister, heathens.

HARX (O.S.)

More birdies!

The group turns around to see Harx maniacally laughing as he and Arthin walk closer.

ARTHIN

We can do this peacefully.

Arthin flourishes her daggers.

ARTHIN

Or we can have a little fun. Your choice.

MUREEL

You dare to threaten the children of the Grand Divine? The Light will put you down.

ARTHIN

Even more wealth to be gained.

CALDWELL

Amalye, stay back. Durin.

Durin is flipping through his book.

DURIN

Yes. Yes. I'm on it.

A crow swoops down and snags his book.

ARTHIN

We're not doing that again.

The guards swoop down to grab Amalye.

Harx jumps over everyone and cannonballs himself into the Alphere guards.

HARX

She's mine!

Harx claws one of the guards' gullet.

CALDWELL
Durin, protect her.

Durin takes Amalye and steps back.

ARTHIN
Can't leave with the prize so soon.

Arthin rushes over, but Caldwell blocks her.

MUREEL
Hands off my sister!

Mureel flies down towards Durin. Harx jumps in the way.

Arthin and Caldwell perform a deadly dance. A swing. A dodge. A parry. A thrust. Sidestep. Spin. It is synchronous, without either one gaining an advantage over the other.

The crows do their best to swoop in for attacks, but Caldwell dodges them with a grace not unlike the Botere.

Mureel swings at Harx, but Harx is quick and scampers around him. In the same motion, he gets a jab into Mureel's side.

Mureel stumbles a bit, then takes to the skies. He repeatedly thrusts his spear at Harx, who jumps back and forth, dodging the attacks.

Arthin attacks in fluid motions, one dagger right after the other. Caldwell flawlessly blocks every attack.

The second Alphere guard gets up and approaches Durin and Amalye. Durin pulls out a dagger to defend them. The guard forms his own light spear.

AMALYE
I don't assume you know any spells
without your book.

Durin gives a nervous chuckle.

The guard lunges forward. Durin pushes Amalye back as he steps out of the way, keeping her behind him.

Amalye grabs the spear and chucks it away. The guard puts up his fists and jabs at Durin. Durin punches him in the nose and he goes down.

Arthin swings both daggers at Caldwell and the two lock as steel scraps against steel.

ARTHIN

Your skills have improved since we
last met.

CALDWELL

Can't say the same about you.

Arthin bears her teeth and kicks him. He steps back from the impact, and follows up with a swing. She dodges.

Harx jumps at Mureel, but Mureel flies up higher. When Harx lands, Mureel dives at him.

Harx skirts to side and jumps onto Mureel. They crash to the ground. Mureel's spear goes flying.

Mureel stands up and readies his fists.

MUREEL

Bring it on!

Mureel throws some jabs. Harx avoids all of them with ease.

Harx punches Mureel in the shoulder, and the sound of bones crushing blares throughout the hills.

AMALYE

Brother!

Another punch, another crack. Mureel stumbles.

MUREEL

Is that all you've got?

HARX

The fun's just starting.

Harx punches Mureel's leg and he falls over.

AMALYE

Leave him alone!

Harx punches Mureel in the face. A crunch. Mureel spews blood.

Another punch. And another punch. A demonic grin on Harx's face.

Harx straightens himself and cracks his blood covered fists.

AMALYE

No!

Amalye reaches for her brother, tears streaming down her face.

Harx walks towards her and Durin.

DURIN
Stay back! Caldwell!

Caldwell turns, seeing the deceased Mureel.

CALDWELL
No.

The distraction is just enough to give Arthin the advantage. She stabs one of her daggers into his left side. He drops his sword.

Harx gets close to Durin, and Durin stretches his hand forward.

DURIN
Don't make me do it!

HARX
Go ahead.

Durin stands there.

Amalye places a hand on Durin's shoulder.

AMALYE
Enough is enough.

Durin turns. Amalye's eye glow bright with light.

Arthin's second dagger goes towards Caldwell's neck, but an arrow hits Arthin in the chest. She looks down. A puff of smoke is released, causing Arthin to cough and release Caldwell.

Two more arrows fly between Arthin and Caldwell. A wall of vines burst from the ground.

Kat charges in.

KAT
Looks like you need saving again.

She nocks an arrow.

Caldwell coughs, clutching his side.

CALDWELL
Appreciated.

Arthin signals to her crows, but they refuse to attack Kat.

ARTHIN
I'll do it myself.

Arthin hacks her way through the vines. As she cuts through, there is a glimpse of Kat's arrow being released. It pierces into Arthin's chest. Her eyes go wide before she falls over.

Harx throws heavy punches at Amalye, but she blocks them all. He jabs again, but she catches his fist. She twists his arm and he kneels.

In her right hand, a mace forms of pure light, solidifying into Falicar's golden mace.

AMALYE
I am Falicar's champion. Enemies of
the Light shall feel my wrath.

She brings the mace down on Harx's head, leaving a heavy indent. Harx falls limp.

Amalye takes a step back. She looks at her friends.

Suddenly the mace vanishes and the light emanating from her eyes dwindles.

Durin rushes to her and she starts to collapse.

He catches her. She is sweating profusely.

INT. ALSEAN MANOR - DAY

Uryth is pacing around when a guard rushes in.

URYTH
Has Mureel returned yet?

GUARD
No, your majesty, but...

URYTH
Where is he? The troops march on
Gallarothe tomorrow. He should have
returned by now.

GUARD
Grand Divine, I...

Uryth storms to the guard, staring him in the eyes.

URYTH

This had better be important. I
have a war to plan!

The guard gulps.

GUARD

Lady Amalye has returned to us,
your majesty. She is with a group
of savages.

Uryth's crazed look turns to one of delight.

URYTH

Wonderful! Prepare a ceremony. My
daughter has come home!

EXT. CAELIOS - GATE - DAY

Amalye and her friends stand at the entrance to Caelios, a
large golden gate with ornate designs.

Two Alphere guards stand at the gate.

Uryth bursts through the gates, startling the guards. There
are more guards with him.

URYTH

Amalye!

Amalye stands still.

AMALYE

Father.

Uryth gives her a hug, but she stiffens as he embraces her.

URYTH

It is so good to have you home.

AMALYE

Father, these are my-

URYTH

Captors. I'm aware. Guards!

The guards rush forth and chain Caldwell, Durin, and Kat.

AMALYE

What? No!

Uryth escorts Amalye into the city.

URYTH
Come now. You must be cleansed
before we hold the ceremony.

Uryth turns to the guards.

URYTH
Take them to the dungeons.

INT. LIGHT CATHEDRAL - DAY

Uryth stands in front of the congregation of Alphere, dresses
in his vestments and mask.

Amalye sits slumped in her chair, wearing her vestments and
mask.

URYTH
It is with warm heart that I
welcome back my dear daughter to
our kingdom.

The congregation cheers.

URYTH
Through the Light and Falicar's
divine guidance, she was returned
to us.

CONGREGATION
Praise Falicar.

Amalye rolls her head.

URYTH
Those heathens that stole her away
from us have been captured as well.
For their crimes against our
people, these barbarians will dealt
with most harshly.

The congregation and Amalye gasp.

URYTH
It is Falicar's wish that we
continue our planned assault on the
human kingdom. It is time we erased
the savages from our island.

Amalye and Veloe stand up.

AMALYE
You can't do this.

VELOE
Have you gone mad?

URYTH
Falicar demands retribution for
these injustices.

Amalye steps forward.

AMALYE
They did not capture me! I ran
away!

The congregation erupts in murmurs and gasps.

Uryth chuckles nervously.

URYTH
Nonsense. Ramblings of one who has
spent so long with those savages.

Amalye marches up to Uryth. The light shining through the
stained glass window lands directly on her.

AMALYE
They are not savages. They are my
friends.

She turns to the congregation.

AMALYE
I spent time with them. They have
their own unique and interesting
cultures.

URYTH
Now is not the time for this, dear.
You do not want all our people
thinking you insane now.

AMALYE
I am not insane! Our people deserve
to know the truth. They have
cities, beautiful clothes, magic,
and books.

The congregation stirs into an uproar.

URYTH
We all know the barbarians can't
read. That would require far more
intellect than they possess.

AMALYE

Durin is my good friend, the elf
that you have thrown in the
dungeon. He is smarter than even
Ouldue.

Ouldue scratches his head in the crowd.

AMALYE

The fish people are incredibly
beautiful and creative. The short
pale ones are inventive. The humans
are closer as a nation than us.

The congregation continues to roar.

Amalye turns to her father.

AMALYE

You would be foolish to attack
them. I've seen their knights in
battle.

Veloe takes a few steps forward.

VELOE

Attacking the kingdom of man is the
worst idea any of the Grand
Divines.

URYTH

Who are you to question what
Falicar tells me?

VELOE

My connection with the Light has
not been severed.

AMALYE

I have felt the Light. I know
Falicar would disagree with this.
Falicar stands for peace.

The congregation goes silent. Uryth stares at Amalye in awe.

URYTH

You have spoken with Falicar?
(under his breath)
I thought I had that under control.

Veloe turns to the Alphere.

VELOE

For years we have known peace.
Uryth seeks to throw away all our
tradition in this meaningless war.

URYTH

Guards, apprehend the madman. I
will stand for no dissension
amongst my people.

Two guards walk over and grab hold of Veloe.

AMALYE

You can't declare war on the
humans. Mureel believed in you. He
laid his life fighting for your
cause.

URYTH

Mureel is dead?

A single tear falls down Uryth's cheek.

URYTH

All the more reason to eradicate
all of them. This is exactly why we
have been pushing them away for
generations!

The congregation gasps.

AMALYE

So it is true. Durin said they have
been reaching out to us. And you
have been ignoring them?

URYTH

Those barbarians cause nothing but
grief and suffering. Constantly at
war. If you were trained like a
true Grand Divine, you would know
that.

AMALYE

Then perhaps it is time for a
change.

URYTH

Are you threatening me? I will not
stand here and be ridiculed by my
child. You will respect your
father!

Uryth raises his hand and swings at Amalye. She catches his hand.

Light shines through the eye holes of her mask. With her free hand, she removes the mask.

AMALYE

No. You will respect the Light.

URYTH

What is this?

AMALYE

You have lost your way. You bring shame to my name. It is time your connection to the Light is severed.

Light bursts from Uryth's eyes, and quickly fades. He falls to his knees.

URYTH

What have you done to me? I can't hear his voice anymore.

AMALYE

You are no longer a child of the Light.

Amalye turns to the congregation.

AMALYE

I am Falicar's chosen champion. Through me, the Light will freed from the tyranny. We shall spread the Light throughout the lands, not war.

The congregation cheers.

Uryth staggers to get up and then charges at Amalye.

She dodges him, grabbing his arm and twisting it behind his back.

URYTH

This is no way to treat your father!

AMALYE

It was no way to treat your children.

The two guards that had apprehended Veloe release him and fly over to grab Uryth.

VELOE
All hail the new Grand Divine!

CONGREGATION
Hail the new Grand Divine!

INT. CAELIOS DUNGEON - DAY

Caldwell, Durin, and Kat are locked in a large jail cell. A simple stone room with iron bars. A few beds, seats, and a table furnish the cell.

Kat sits on a bed in the corner, huddled up.

Caldwell walks around, examining every bar and stone.

Durin lies on another bed, facing the ceiling.

DURIN
Despite having imprisoned us, the
Alphere seem quite gracious. I
mean, they've given us separate
beds.

Durin rolls onto his side, looking at Caldwell.

DURIN (CONT'D)
How do you think they're gonna
execute us?

CALDWELL
What?

DURIN
Like, what do you think their
preferred method is? Decapitation?
Throw us off the mountain? Feed us
to a gryphon? There are so many
options.

Caldwell chips a piece of rock off the wall.

CALDWELL
I'm much more interested in getting
out of here.

Caldwell waves the chipped rock at Durin.

An Alphere walks in, and Caldwell hides his rock.

The Alphere slides a tray of fancy looking food through the bars, and leaves.

Durin hops off the bed and eats.

Amalye and two guards enter the dungeon. She is wearing far more elegant vestments than before. Her hair is tied back with golden ribbons. She is adorned with jewelry.

DURIN
(mouth full of food)
Amalye!

Kat perks up and Caldwell rushes to the bars.

AMALYE
Sorry I didn't visit sooner.

She rubs her arms.

AMALYE (CONT'D)
The ceremonies and preparations
took far longer than I cared for,
but I'm here now.

She signals to the guards.

AMALYE (CONT'D)
Open the dungeon.

The guards unlock the cell door and swing it open.

Caldwell leans in.

CALDWELL
Are you sure we can trust these
two? We should knock them out
before we escape.

Amalye giggles.

AMALYE
There's no need to escape. I am the
Grand Divine now. You are free to
go, or stay. The choice is yours.

Durin's jaw drops and some food falls out. He wipes his chin.

DURIN
You're the Grand Divine? That's
incredible.

CALDWELL
I knew you had it in you.

AMALYE

I would have come alone, but my people are still a little skeptical.

Kat quickly, and stealthily, darts out of the gate.

DURIN

This is so amazing! Are you the first female Grand Divine? Does this mean Caelios will open its gate to visitors? Are the Alphere going to mingle with the other races, like in ancient times?

AMALYE

We will. The coronation has changed a lot and I must get to work.

Amalye begins walking away.

AMALYE (CONT'D)

If you stick around for a bit, I will see you off once I'm done.

Caldwell exits the cell and collects his armor and sword.

DURIN

Oh this is so exciting!

Durin literally hops with each step.

DURIN (CONT'D)

I get to be the first Ere to study the daily life of the Alphere.

CALDWELL

How spectacular.

Caldwell puts his armor on.

DURIN

You aren't going to leave are you?

CALDWELL

I'll stick around until she returns, but I'm going home.

DURIN

Oh.

INT. THRONE ROOM - DAY

Amalye enters a large throne room with Izana by her side. Both women are dressed in several layers of vestments.

The throne room is massive, with lines of stone pillars and large tapestries embroidered with lions. At the far end of the room is an elaborate carved stone throne, filled with cushions, with a long red carpet leading to it.

EMPEROR QUILLION sits in the throne. He has short salt and pepper hair with a medium length beard and a few wrinkles on his forehead. He wears silken robes of red and purple. A bejeweled crown adorns his head.

Caldwell stands to the left of the throne, wearing his knight armor.

HIGH GENERAL THERA stands to the right. She wears heavy armor, covering even more than Caldwell's armor. Her flaming red hair flows over the armor. A long purple cape bunches up on the floor behind her.

QUILLION

Welcome to Gallaroth, Grand Divine.

Amalye bows her head.

QUILLION (CONT'D)

Still planning to march your army on me? Thera is prepared to fight whatever you throw us.

AMALYE

I apologize for my father's brashness. I hope to establish better relationships than any of the Grand Divines before me.

Quillion smirks.

QUILLION

You are the first Grand Divine to grace this throne room.

AMALYE

During my journey, your caravans proved themselves. I wish to open Caelios to your caravans.

Quillion sits there in silence for a moment.

QUILLION

That mountain pass needs a lot of work.

(pause)

I accept.

AMALYE

I appreciate it, Emperor. May our kingdoms grow closer through this.

Quillion nods. Amalye and Izana begin walking out.

Caldwell rushes over to her.

CALDWELL

Amalye, wait.

Amalye turns around.

CALDWELL (CONT'D)

You're doing a good job.

AMALYE

I just hope I can fix everything.

Caldwell places his hand on her shoulder.

CALDWELL

You've grown a lot. I am really proud of what you've become.

Amalye tears up.

CALDWELL (CONT'D)

Where are you headed next?

AMALYE

We are going to Sanni.

Caldwell chuckles.

CALDWELL

Good luck.

INT. COUNCIL CHAMBER - DAY

Hallith escorts Amalye and Izana into the Sanni council chamber, a large stuccoed room with a table in the center. Several chairs circle the table.

Many of the chairs are filled by the ERE COUNCILMEN.

HALLITH

Grand Divine, this is the Ere Council. They are in charge of Sanni and the Ere Republic on a whole.

Amalye bows reverently.

AMALYE

It is my pleasure.

Hallith takes a seat.

AMALYE (CONT'D)

I come to you today to welcome the Ere scholars into Caelios. I think it is time we share our history with the world.

COUNCILMAN

We graciously accept your offer.

AMALYE

I also hoped that we could share libraries. As it turns out, ours is incomplete, to say the least.

The councilmen lean in and whisper to each other.

COUNCILMAN

That one will we have to discuss, in private. Our library is quite sacred.

AMALYE

I understand. I would also open up our abbey for others to be trained in the art of Light magic. In return, I would ask that my people are accepted into your Mage College.

HALLITH

Don't think you've proved me wrong. I respect your aura, Grand Divine. I will allow Alphere into the college.

AMALYE

Thank you.

Durin bursts into the chamber. He is dressed in far nicer robes than before. He marches towards Amalye.

DURIN

Amalye!

(pause)

My bad. Grand Divine! Still have to
get use to that.

Amalye looks to Izana and mouths to hurry out and they start
for the door, but Durin walks next to them.

DURIN (CONT'D)

I gotta say. Being able to be the
first scholar to publish a first
hand account of living amongst the
Alphere. It was a great
opportunity. I could never thank
you enough.

AMALYE

Congratulations on your
achievement.

Izana opens the door for Amalye.

DURIN

Must you leave so soon? We should
catch up!

AMALYE

Sorry. I do have a kingdom to run
now. Maybe another time.

Amalye and Izana fly out the door.

EXT. SKY - DAY

Amalye and Izana fly in the clouds.

IZANA

What comes next, your holiness?

AMALYE

Izzy, you're my best friend. You
don't have to call me that.

IZANA

Sorry.

AMALYE

We still have a lot we need to fix.
With time, we shall become what
Falicar dreamed for us.

FADE TO: BLACK

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